



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NEDL TRANSFER



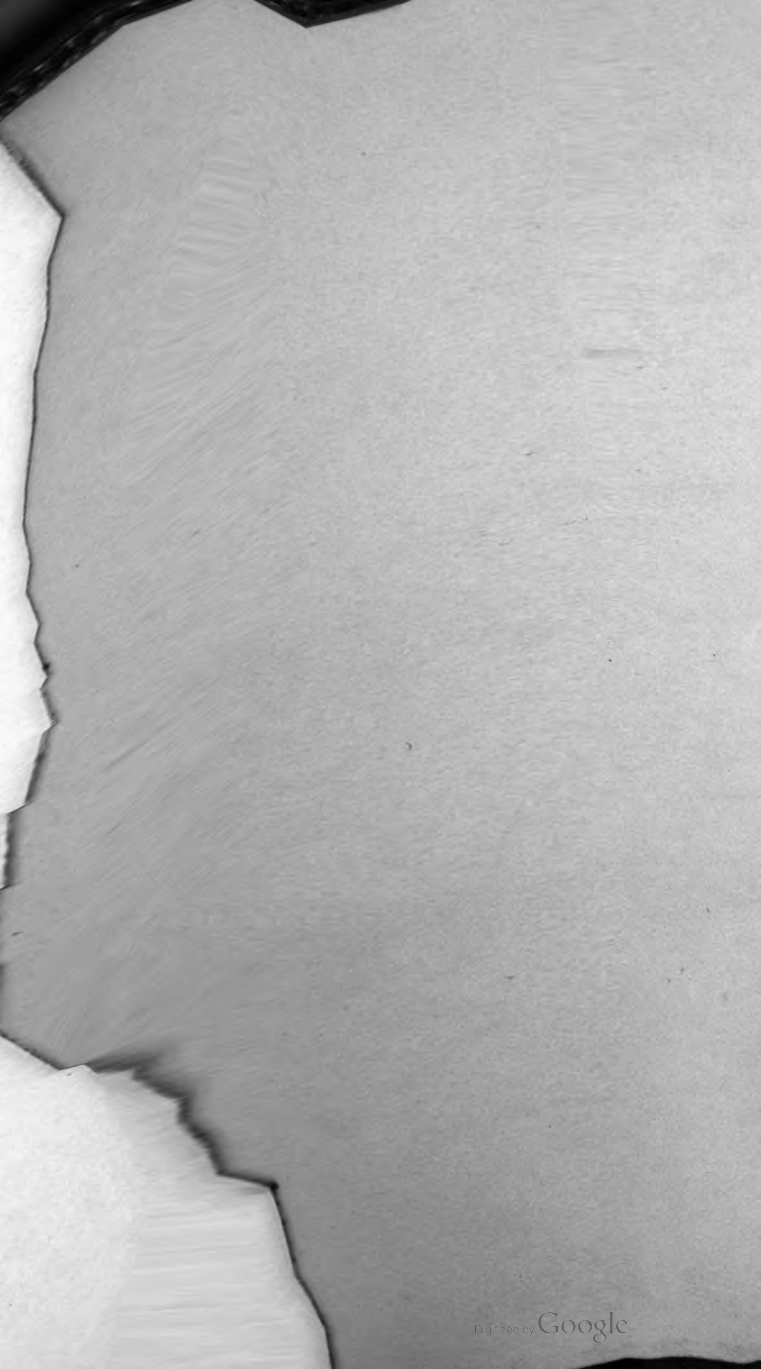
HN 2377 6

KD

15(2)







ANECDOTES
OF
Music,
HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL;
IN A
SERIES OF LETTERS
FROM A
GENTLEMAN TO HIS DAUGHTER.

BY
A. BURGH, A. M.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1814.

KD 54115(2)



055*42

ANECDOTES OF MUSIC,

&c. &c.

LETTER XXIV.

April 19, 1813.

STATE OF MUSIC IN ITALY, DURING THE SIX-
TEENTH CENTURY.

MELODY, the child of fancy, was still held in Gothic chains, and the subject of every movement was invariable.

To check imagination's wild vagaries, and restrain her wanton flights in the solemnity of supplication, humility of contrition, funereal sorrow, or even the cheerful song of gladness and thanksgiving, when addressed to the Divinity, during the celebration of sacred rites in the temple, is not only required by propriety, but duty ; yet, as the confining music entirely to religious purposes borders on fanaticism, so the treating secular and light subjects with eccle-

siastical gravity, making a fugue of every movement, and regarding grace, elegance, and fertility of invention, as criminal, or at best, as frivolous, are equally proofs of a deficiency in taste and candour.

What kind of music the Italians cultivated before the general use of counterpoint was established, we cannot ascertain; but we find, in the lives of their first painters, that many of them had been brought up to music as a profession. Leonardo da Vinci, for instance, was an excellent performer on several instruments, and invented a new species of lyre in the shape of a horse's skull.

Great natural powers frequently astonish and charm without much assistance from art; and so late as the year 1547, Pietro Aaron gives a list of such *extraordinary* performers as were able to sing from notes "*cantare a libro*," by which we may suppose that the art was then in its infancy.

And, according to Tartini, "the old Italian songs being only made for a single voice, were simple in the highest degree; partaking of the nature of *recitative*, but *largo*," (as the gondoliers of Venice still sing the stanzas of Tasso.) "None were confined to regular bars, and the key was determined by the quality and compass of voice that was to sing them."

During the sixteenth century, however, when the works of Palestrina appeared, the Italians may, with

justice, be said to have given instructions to the rest of Europe, in *counterpoint*, as ever since the establishment of operas, they have done in singing.

It has been frequently observed, that the life of a studious man, whose mind is more active than his body, affords few materials for biography, even if every transaction of his life were known; but at a remote period, when every lineament and trace of character is obliterated, it is with difficulty that the time and place even of his existence can be ascertained, or the works enumerated, which his genius and diligence have produced.

GIOVANNI PIERLUIGI DA PALESTRINA, whose works have been so justly admired and celebrated, is of this class; for little more has been recorded of his life, than if it had been wholly spent in a hermitage. His birth, however, has been fixed, with some degree of certainty, in the year 1529, at *Palestrina*, the *Præneste* of the ancients.

Italy being at that time, and till very lately, divided into many independent states, each of which had a distinct and separate honour to maintain; the natives are not only very careful in settling the spot where a man of genius was born, but of recording the place where he was educated, together with the name of his master; and as the painters of Italy are appropriated to their different schools, so are the

musicians ; and a composer or performer of eminent abilities is seldom mentioned without his country, by which it is known that he is of the Roman, Venetian, Neapolitan, Lombard, or Bolognese school, each of which has some peculiar characteristic, that enables one intelligent musician of Italy immediately to discover the school of another, by his works or performance. To these distinctions the natives of other countries so little attend, that when it is said a musician comes from Italy, no further inquiry is made.

From this ancient custom of naming the master with the scholar, and his country, all the writers of Italy who have given any account of Palestrina have thought it necessary to say that he was a pupil of GAUDIO MELL, *Fiamingo*, a Fleming ; by whom they have been generally understood to mean CLAUD GOUDIMEL, a native of Franche-Comté, and a Huguenot, who was among the first who set the translation of the Psalms by Clement Marot, and Theodore Beza, to music ; and who was murdered at Lyons in 1572, during the massacre on St. Bartholomew's Day.

From the few circumstances and outlines of Palestrina's life, which have been preserved, we may collect, that he was born in the year 1529 ; and that, having distinguished himself as a composer, he

was admitted, about 1555, into the Pope's Chapel at Rome. In 1562, at the age of thirty-three, he was elected *Maestro di Capella* of Santa Maria Maggiore, in the same city; and upon the death of Giovanni Animuccia, in 1571, he was honoured with a similar appointment at St. Peter's; and lastly, having brought choral harmony to a degree of perfection that has never since been exceeded, he died in the year 1594, at the age of sixty-five.

The following account of his death and burial was entered in the register of the Pontifical Chapel, by Ippolito Gamboce, *Puntatore*, who, at that time, had the care of the records.

“ February the 2d, 1594. This morning died
 “ the most excellent musician, Signor Giovanni
 “ Pierloisci, our dear companion, and Maestro di
 “ Capella of St. Peter's Church, whither his fune-
 “ ral was attended, not only by all the musicians of
 “ Rome, but by an infinite concourse of people,
 “ when *Libera me, Domine*, was sung by the whole
 “ College.” To this account Adami adds that of
 Torrigio, who says: “ In St. Peter's Church,
 “ near the altar of St. Simon and St. Jude, was
 “ interred, in consequence of his extraordinary
 “ abilities, *Pierluigi da Palestrina*, the great
 “ musical composer; and Maestro di Capella of
 “ this church. His funeral was attended by all

“ the musicians of Rome; and ‘ *Libera me, Domine,*’ as composed by himself in five parts, “ was sung by three choirs. Upon his coffin was “ this inscription, ‘ *Joannes Petrus Aloysius Praenestinus Musicae Princeps.*’ ”

It were endless to transcribe all the eulogiums that have been bestowed upon Palestrina, by musical writers, though he has seldom been mentioned by others; but it is left to artists to take care of their own fame, and that of their brethren. Heroes indeed are consigned to historians, and the learned are seldom negligent of themselves.

However, very honourable mention was made of our great contrapuntist, during his lifetime, by Giovanni Guidetto, chaplain to Pope Gregory the Thirteenth; who being appointed to collate, collect, and regulate the choir service of St. Peter’s church, in 1582, says, that he was unwilling to depend solely on his own judgment in this undertaking, and therefore had applied to that prince of musicians, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, to superintend and correct the whole work; an office, which he was so obliging as to undertake. “ And “ (he adds) if the compilation be found to have any “ merit, it must be chiefly ascribed to his kind assistance.”

Some judgment may be formed of the great

vation in which he was held by contemporary professors, from a collection of Psalms, in five parts, that was published in 1592, and dedicated to Palestrina, by fourteen of the greatest masters of Italy at that time.

By the friendly assistance of Signor Santarelli, Dr. Burney procured, when he was at Rome, a complete catalogue of all the genuine productions of Palestrina, with the several dates and forms of their publication, title of each piece, and the name and residence of the printer. These are classed in the following manner.

MASSSES in four, five, and six parts—of which Book 1st. appeared at Rome in folio, 1554, when the author was in the twenty-fifth year of his age; and in that city only went through three several editions during his life. Book 2d. of his Masses, which includes the celebrated composition, intitled *MISSA PAPÆ MARCELLI*, was published at Rome, 1567.

Of this production, it has been related by Antonio Liberati, and after him by Adami, and other musical writers, that the Pope and conclave, being offended and scandalized at the light and injudicious manner in which the Mass had been long set and performed, determined to banish *music in parts* entirely from the church; but that Palestrina, at the

age of twenty-six, during the short pontificate of Marcellus Cervinus, entreated his Holiness to suspend the execution of his design, till he had heard a Mass, composed in what, according to his ideas, was the true ecclesiastical style.

His request being granted, this composition in six parts, was performed at Easter, 1555, before the Pope and college of Cardinals; who found it so grave, noble, elegant, learned, and pleasing, that music was restored to favour, and again established in the celebration of sacred rites.

This Mass was afterwards printed, and dedicated to the successor of Marcellus, Pope Paul the Fourth, by whom Palestrina was appointed Maestro di Capella to the pontifical chapel.

The friends of choral music will doubtless be curious, to have a faithful and minute account of a composition, which had sufficient power to preserve their favourite art from disgrace and excommunication.

Dr. Burney assures us, from an accurate score, procured for him by Signor Santarelli, out of the Sistine chapel, where it is still performed, that it is the most simple of all Palestrina's works: no canon, inverted fugue, or complicated measures, having been attempted throughout the composition; the style is solemn—the harmony pure—and, by its

facility, the performer and hearer are equally exempted from trouble.

The rest of his Masses appeared in the following order.—*Book III. Romæ per Valerium Doricum*, 1570, in folio, Ven. 1599. *Book IV. Venet. per Ang. Gardanum*, 1582, quarto. *V. Romæ*, 1590. *VI. Ven.* 1596. *VII.* 1594. *VIII. and IX. Ven.* 1599. *X. and XI. Ven.* 1600. And *XII.* without date or name of the printer. Besides this regular order of publication, these Masses were reprinted in different forms and collections, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in most of the principal cities of Italy.

The next division of Palestrina's works consists of MOTETS for five, six, seven, and eight voices, in five books, printed at Rome and Venice, 1569, 1588, 1589, 1596, 1601.

MOTETS for four voices, Lib. I. *Romæ*, 1590. II. *Venet.* 1604.

Two books of OFFERTORII, à 5, è a 6 voc. *Romæ*, 1593.

LAMENTATIONI à 4 voc. *Romæ*, 1588.

HYMNS for 5 voices, Ven. 1598.

LITANIE, à 4 voc. Ven. 1600.

MAGNIFICAT, 8 tonum, *Romæ*, 1591. And

MADRIGALI *Spirituali*, two books, Rome and Venice, 1594.

To this list are to be added, *LA CANTICA DI SALOMONE*, a 5; two other books of *Magnificats*, a 4, 5, e 6. *voc.*; one of *Lamentationi*, a 5; and another of *secular madrigals*. These have been printed in miscellaneous publications, after the author's death; and there still remain in the Papal chapel, unedited, another Mass, a 4, upon the hexachord, *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la*; his *Missa Defunctorum*, a 5; and upwards of twenty motets, chiefly for 8 voices, a *due cori*.

Nothing more remains to be related of Palestrina, except, that most of his admirable productions still subsist. Few of his admirers, indeed, are possessed of the first editions of *all his works* complete, in print or manuscript: yet curious and diligent collectors in Italy can still, with little difficulty, furnish themselves with a considerable number of these models of counterpoint, and ecclesiastical gravity.

If we consider the slow manner in which works of this description are conducted, from the many *real* parts they contain, and of which some are generally moving in *canon*, and the rest *always in fugue*, we shall be as much astonished at the *number* of his productions, as pleased with their effects. The works of Aristotle, Cicero, or the Elder Pliny, among the ancients, or of Fabricius among the

moderns, were hardly more numerous. With the union, indeed, of great *erudition*, and great industry, we are not surprised; but GENIUS is seldom so voluminous.

Palestrina having brought his style to such perfection, that the best compositions which have been produced for the church since his time, are proverbially said to be *alla Palestrina*, this appears to be the proper place to discuss its merit.

Though good taste has banished fugue, canon, and elaborate composition from the stage, yet sound judgment has still retained them in the church; to which, from the little use that is made of them elsewhere, they are now in a manner appropriated.*

On this account, like the *canto fermo* of the

* There seems no more impropriety in their being occasionally used in the chamber, than private prayer or family devotion.—It is to be wished, however, that the church and stage were *wholly* separated: for surely, whoever represents the rites of the church in the theatre, or introduces theatrical levity into the church, betrays a deficiency of taste and judgment, and a total disregard of the reverence due to the religion of his country.

Romish service, however one chant may resemble another, and the subject and modulation of fugues may be stolen, yet they will still be in the style of choral music, and never awaken ideas of secular songs, or profane transactions.

In the compositions of Palestrina, there is indeed no *unity of melody*; but as all the parts have an equal share of importance, and as hardly a note appears in them, without some peculiar intention and effect, they cannot, like the *remplissage* of a modern concerto or opera song, be composed with as much rapidity as they could be transcribed: little invention and few flights of fancy are required: yet there is a degree of genius in finding a few uncommon notes that are favourable to fugue and canon, as well as in creating new and graceful passages in melody. Indeed, both the choral and secular styles have their peculiar difficulties, beauties, and defects.

Whoever is accustomed to the vocal fugues of Palestrina, Carissimi, or Handel, will be fastidious with respect to those of other composers of equal learning. Preaching upon a text has been called a Gothic contrivance; and yet, what admirable lessons of piety and virtue have been produced under the denomination of sermons! Thus fire, genius, and harmonical resources are discoverable in fugues,

as well as in modern songs, solos, and concertos. A musical student, therefore, unacquainted with the laws of fugue, is advanced but a little way in composition; as the hearer, who receives no pleasure from ingenious contrivance and complicated harmony, is but a superficial judge. The legitimate and main object of criticism should ever be, to resolve the discords of contention, to augment the gratification of both parties, and extend the compass of their views; that, like music, composed *à due cori*, the friends of harmony and melody may *agree*, though performing different parts at a distance from each other.

To return to Palestrina.—It appears, from the works of this most venerable and exquisite harmonist, that he had not only studied the greatest masters of his own time, but those also of the preceding century; and after vanquishing the difficulties of their style and contrivances, he demonstrated in his early works, that he could bring them all into action, together with the admirable improvement of a more polished harmony, and a more flowing melody, consulting in every difficult enterprize the *ear* more frequently than the *eye*.

He not only knew, says Padre Martini, how to avoid the roughness, but likewise the languor of

anterior composers; and with a harmony more full and grateful, he infused a modest and decent cheerfulness into the melody of every part; and, without incommoding the singer by unnatural difficulties, formed a complete whole.

However, notwithstanding the usual noble simplicity of his style, for which he has been so justly celebrated, he did not entirely abandon the *strange proportions*, which pedantry, and an affectation of mystical science, had introduced; for he employs them all in his Mass, upon the melody of *l'homme armé*, which abounds in vain and unmeaning difficulties.

He likewise, for some time, adhered to the absurd and almost impious practice of composing Masses upon vulgar tunes, as appears by the titles, as well as the subjects, of those in his second and third books. However, he discontinued this Gothic custom after the year 1570, when, probably, a better taste became general.

It is hoped no apology will be necessary for the pages, that have been devoted to the professional history of PALESTRINA. In the annals of *ancient poetry*, Homer would doubtless occupy the most ample and honourable station; and Palestrina, unquestionably the Homer of the most *ancient music* that has been preserved, as justly merits all the

reverence and attention, which it is in a musical biographer's power to bestow.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXV.

April 27th, 1813.

SECULAR MUSIC IN ITALY, DURING THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Luca Marenzio.

PALESTRINA, as we have already observed, carried the grave and ecclesiastic style of music to a degree of perfection unknown to his predecessors—and, perhaps in point of propriety and essential grandeur, never since exceeded.

Secular music also began now to be cultivated with almost equal success. Masters of the first class now directed their talents to the production of **MADRIGALS**; a style of composition that attained its highest degree of perfection towards the latter end of the sixteenth century, by means of the superior genius of **LUCA MARENZIO**.

This ingenious, elegant, and in his line, *unrivalled composer*, was born at Coccaglia, in the diocese of Brescia. His natural inclination leading him very early to the composition of madrigals, like his contemporary Palestrina, he obtained an acknowledged superiority over all his predecessors : and the number also of his publications is prodigious.* In the madrigal style he was called by his countrymen, “ Il piu dolce Cigno ;” and Sebastian Raval, the Spaniard, who was editor of some of his works, styles him a divine composer. He was sometime Maestro di Capella to Cardinal Luigi d’Este ; and, according to Adami and others, caressed and patronized by many princes and eminent personages, par-

* At Venice, between the years 1587 and 1601, were printed nine books of his Madrigals for five Voices : the two last were posthumous. Besides these, he composed six books of Madrigals in six parts : Madrigals for three voices ; another set for five ; and another for six voices, different from all the former. Canzonets for the Lute ; *Motetti a 4* ; and *Sacras Cantiones*, 5, 6, ac 7, *Vocibus Modulandas*. All these works were first printed at Venice, and afterwards at Antwerp, and many of them in London to English words. See *Musica Transalpina*, two Books ; and a *Collection of Italian Madrigals, with English Words*, published in 1589, by Thomas Watson.

ticularly by the King of Poland, and Cardinal Cinthio Aldobrandini, nephew to Pope Clement the Eighth.

Upon his return to Rome, after quitting Poland, he was admitted into the Pope's chapel; and dying in that city, in 1599, he was buried in the church of St. Lorenzo, in Lucina.

Our countryman, Peacham,* speaks of his "delicious *aire*, and sweet invention in madrigals;" and says, "that he excelled all other whatsoever, having published more sets than any author else; and hath not an *ill song*." Adding that "his first, second, and third parts of *Thyrsis*, *Veggo dolce il mio ben*, &c. are "songs, the Muses themselves might not have been ashamed to have composed." To this we may readily subscribe, and will not dispute his stature, or the colour of his hair, when he further tells us, "that he was a little black man:" but when he asserts that "he was *organist* of the Pope's chapel at Rome a good while, where there *never was an organ*, we can no longer credit his report; nor is it likely, however great the musical merit of this little black man may have been, that the niece of any

* See Complete Gentleman, page 101, edition of 1634.

reigning Pope could have been sent for to Poland, as Peacham tells us, with so little ceremony, in the character of a lutenist and singer, in order to gratify the curiosity of his Polish majesty, and the affection of Luca Marenzio. In short, the whole account is compiled from hearsay evidence, and abounds in absurdities; and is so much the more incredible, as no other musical writers, eager as they were to record every memorial they could procure concerning this celebrated musician, have ventured to relate these strange circumstances.

There are no madrigals so agreeable to the ear, or amusing to the eye, as those of this ingenious and fertile composer. The subjects of fugue, imitation, and attack, are traits of elegant and pleasing melody; which, though they seem selected with the utmost care, for the sake of the words they are to express, yet so artful are the texture and disposition of the parts, that the general harmony and effect of the whole are as complete and unembarrassed as if he had been writing in plain counterpoint, without poetry or contrivance.

The madrigals of the sixteenth century appear now so grave, as to be scarcely distinguishable from the music of the church; yet the masters of that period had very distinct and characteristic rules for composing in both styles. Pietro Pontio, who had

himself produced many that were excellent, in giving instructions for composing madrigals, says, " that
 " the subjects of *fugue* and *imitation* in them should
 " be short, and the notes of a quicker kind, and
 " more syncopated, than in church music, otherwise
 " they would not be madrigals. The parts likewise
 " should frequently move together, but the greatest
 " care should be taken to express the sense of the
 " words, as exactly as musical imitation will allow,
 " not only by quick and slow passages, or notes as-
 " cending and descending occasionally, but also by
 " modulation, which, when the sentiment of the poet
 " implies harshness, cruelty, pain, sorrow, or even
 " joy and pleasure, will assist the expression more
 " than single notes." Here he refers to the fourth
 madrigal of Orlando di Lasso, book the first, for an
 example of the happy expression of words.

Though composers were still very timid in the use of flats, sharps, and transposed keys, yet licences were taken in madrigals, which were inadmissible in music for the church. The answers to subjects delivered were rather imitations than regular replies according to the strict laws of fugue; yet, with respect to the melody of the short passages or musical sentences that were used, and the harmony with which they were accompanied, great pains seem to have been taken in polishing both. Indeed, at this

was the favourite music of the chamber, where it is probable that critics and lovers of music constantly attended ; for neither public concerts nor operas had as yet existence ; there can be no doubt that every refinement was bestowed on this species of composition, which the ideas of musical perfection could then suggest.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

April 28, 1813.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Venetian School.

IN the two last letters we have endeavoured to convey some idea of the respective merits of the two most able musicians of the Roman school, during the sixteenth century. We shall now proceed to Venice, a city which has always patronized and encouraged music, more perhaps than any other in Europe ; for, from the peculiarity of its local situation, having no field sports, suburban diversions, or *land*

near enough for the purpose of riding or walking for recreation ; it was natural, and almost necessary for its inhabitants to cherish and refine such amusements as were compatible with their insulated situation.

At the head of this school the Italians themselves place ADRIAN WILLAERT, the pupil of John Mouton, and master of Zarlino. Willaert, or, as he is usually called in Italy, Adriano, was born at Bruges in Flanders, and, during his youth, studied the law at Paris; if, with the view of making it his profession, there must have been an early conflict between legislation and music, the last of which having a powerful advocate in his own heart, gained the cause; for, by his own account, he went to Rome in the time of Leo the Tenth, where he found that his own motet, *Verbum bonum, et suave*, was performed as the production of Josquin: it is evident, therefore, that he was known as a composer previous to his arrival at Rome.

This motet is in six parts: soprano, two counter-tenor, tenor, baritono, and bass. It was published at Fossombrone in 1519, forty-three years before Zarlino made him an interlocutor in his Dialogue (*Ragionamente*) at Venice; and it can hardly be imagined, that no other of his compositions appeared till 1542, when we are told, that his motets for six

voices were published. This edition, which we discover by the title was not the first, is preserved in the British Museum, where also we find the most splendid and curious work of this author. It was published at Ferrara in 1558, by his scholar and friend, FRANCESCO VIOLA, (another of the interlocutors in Zarlino's *Ragionamento*), under the title of *Musica Nova*, in three, four, five, six, and seven parts. In the dedication of this work to Alphonso D'Este, Duke of Ferrara, the editor, his Maestro di Capella, calls Adriano his master; and says, that he is strongly attached to him, not only for his wonderful abilities in music, but also on account of his integrity and learning, and the friendship with which he has long honoured him. Zarlino likewise omits no opportunity of exalting the character of his instructor.

These are honourable testimonies of regard, which seem the more worthy of being recorded, as either from the worthlessness of the master, or ingratitude of the scholar, such instances of private worth very rarely occur in musical annals.

In this publication, there is a wooden cut of the author, "*Adriani Willaert Flandrii Effigies*;" and the compositions contained in it are of that elaborate description for which he was chiefly renowned, and such as the editor thought would constitute the

most durable monument of his glory. Zarlino assigns to Adriano the *Invention of Pieces for two or more Choirs*; and Piccitoni says, that he was the first who made the basses in compositions of eight parts, move in unisons, or octaves: particularly when divided into two choirs, and performed at a distance from each other, as under such circumstances, they had occasion for a powerful guide. The dexterity and resources of this author, in the construction of canons, are truly wonderful, as is indeed *his total want of melody*; for it is scarcely possible to arrange musical sounds with less air or meaning in the single parts. But there are many avenues through which a musician may travel to the temple of fame; and he who pursues the track which the learned have marked out, will perhaps find it the least circuitous.

For theorists, who are the most likely to record the adventures of passengers in that road, will be the readiest to give him a cast. A learned and elaborate style conceals the want of genius more effectually than the free and fanciful productions of the present times.

Adriano lived to a great age, and filled a very exalted musical station, being Maestro di Capella of St. Mark's Church at Venice. His works and scholars were very numerous; and among those to whom

he communicated the principles of his art, and who afterwards attained great eminence, were Cipriano Rore, Zarlino, already mentioned, and Costanza Porta.

NEAPOLITAN SCHOOL.

This school, in which counterpoint has in late times been so successfully cultivated, was established in the fifteenth century, during the reign of Ferdinand of Arragon, King of Naples, from 1458 to 1494; who, according to Biancardi, was not only an encourager of literature, but likewise learned himself. During this period, Naples abounded with extraordinary men of every profession; among whom, Franchinus Gafurius, John Tinctor, William Guarniero, and Bernard Yeart, cultivated both the theory and practice of music in that city with great success.

Padre Martini places Rocco RODIO, author of *Regoli di Musica*, printed at Naples in 1620, at the head of the Neapolitan school, after John Tinctor; yet it is difficult to ascertain the exact period when this author flourished. Though we know but of few musical treatises produced by Neapolitans during this period, the names and celebrity of many practical musicians have been recorded, and the works of a considerable number of composers preserved.

The most ancient *Secular* music in parts, after the invention of counterpoint, that Dr. Burney was able to discover on the continent, is the harmony that was set to the rustic and street tunes of the kingdom of Naples; and these, under the several denominations of *Arie*, *Canzonette*, *Villote*, and *Villanella alla Napolitana*, were as much in fashion throughout Europe during the sixteenth century, as *Provençal* songs were in preceding times, and Venetian ballads have been since. Besides the old tunes which were collected and published in four parts, others were composed, not only by the natives, but in imitation of those short familiar airs, by almost all the principal composers of other places, of which innumerable volumes were published at Venice, Antwerp, and elsewhere, under the same titles.

Dr. Burney says, that the most genuine, and the best of these tunes which he had seen, were the *Canzone Villanesche, alla Napolitana*, by Perissone Cambio, in 1551, and those of Baldassare Donato, published at Venice, in very good counterpoint of four parts, in 1555. In these little national songs, there is generally more humour in the words, and more air and vivacity in the melody than in any other compositions equally ancient. They appear to have been originally sung in the streets in parts, as

the words of several imply. In one of them, a singing master speaks, who offers to teach the gammut in an hour, and the syllables, *ut, re, mi, fa*, &c. are ingeniously applied in most of the parts, to such sounds as require them in solmisation.

Of the poetry to which these tunes were sung, Grescimbeni and Quadrio give an account by the name of *Villanelle*. Adrian Willaert, Ven. 1540. Macque, 1555. Textore, 1566. Riccio, 1577. Bernadino Draghi, 1581. Pinelli, 1585. Luca Martini, 1584, 1586, 1592. Ferrabosco, 1593, and Orlando di Lasso, 1594; all published *Canzonette*, and *Villanelle, alla Napolitana*.

No Neapolitan composer however, of this distant period is mentioned with such unbounded applause as DON CARLO GESUALDO, PRINCE OF VENOSA; it will be necessary therefore to pay our respects to the abilities of this celebrated and illustrious dilettanti, in consideration of the honour he has conferred upon the science of music.

This prince, whose fame has been extended by his musical productions, more extensively than by his high rank; though this rank will be found reciprocally to have reflected lustre on his compositions, was nephew to Cardinal Alphonzo Gesualdo, Archbishop of Naples, and had his title from the place,

which gave birth to Horace*, the *Venusium* of the Ancients.

Pomponius Nenna, a voluminous and celebrated composer of madrigals, had the honour to instruct him in music. His productions consist of six sets of madrigals for five voices, and one for six. The principal editor of his works was Simone Molinare, Maestro di Capella at Genoa, who, in 1585 published the first five books in separate parts; and, in 1613, the same madrigals, with the addition of a sixth book in Score †.

The first and second books were republished in parts at Venice in 1603, and dedicated to the author by Scipione Stilla, a Neapolitan monk, who was himself also a composer of madrigals: both the dedications are dated 1594. An edition of the third book was published at Venice, 1619, by Gardano. The fourth book also was reprinted at the same place, and dedicated to the author by Hettorre Gesualdo,

* See Satire 1st, Book 2. v. 35. and Odes. Book 3. Ode 4. v. 9.

† Partitura delli sei libri de' madrigale a cinque voci, dell' illustrissimo e excellentissimo principe de Venosa, D. Carlo Gesualdo, Fatica di Simone Molinare, Maestro di Capella nel Duomo di Genova.

1604 ; and a third impression of the fifth book with a new edition of the sixth were published at Venice by Gardano, 1616. Copies of all these, except the fifth book, are preserved in the collection of music bequeathed to Christ Church, Oxford, by Drs. Aldrich and Goodson. The numerous editions of these madrigals published in different parts of Europe, and the encomiums bestowed on their author by persons who rank high in literature, "made me, says Dr. Burney," extremely curious to see and "examine them." Gerard Vossius, Bianconi, Bapt. Doni, Tassone, and many others speak of him as the greatest composer of modern times ; as one, who quitting the beaten track of other musicians, had discovered new melodies, new measures, new harmonies, and new modulation ; so that singers and players on instruments, despising all other music, were pleased only with that of this Prince *.

* Opinions of ancient things are more frequently taken upon trust than formed from actual examination : thus *Rousseau*, who had more taste and knowledge than to approve such compositions had he heard or seen them, tells us, after Vossius and Bianchini, "that the elegant "and learned madrigals of the Prince of Venosa, were "admired by all the masters, and sung by all the ladies "of his time." See Dict. de Musique. Art. Madrigale.

Tassone tells us, that James the First, King of Scotland, had not only composed sacred music, but invented a new species of plaintive melody, different from all others; "in which he has been imitated by the Prince of Venosa, who, in our times, has embellished music with many admirable inventions."* "This assertion," continues Dr. Burney, "greatly increased my curiosity to examine works, in which so many excellencies were centered; particularly desirous of tracing the peculiarities of the national melodies to Scotland, to a higher source than DAVID RIZZIO. But in a very attentive perusal of all the several parts, of the whole six books of the Prince of Venosa's madrigals, I was utterly unable to discover the least similitude or imitation of Caledonian airs in any one of them: which, so far from Scots melodies, contain no melodies at all: nor, when scored, can we discover the least regularity of de-

* Noi ancora possiamo connumerar trà nostri Jacopo, Re di Scozia, che non pur cose sacre compose in canto, ma trovò da se stesso una nuova musicà, lamentabile, e mesta, differente da tutte l'altre. Nel che poi è stato imitato da Carlo Gesualdo, Principe di Venosa; che in questa nostra età hà illustrata anch' egli la musica con nuove mirabili inventioni. Lib. x. cap. xxiii.

“ sign, phraseology, rhythm, or indeed any thing
 “ remarkable in these madrigals, except unprincipled
 “ modulation, and the perpetual embarrassments and
 “ inexperience of an amateur, in the arrangements
 “ and filling up of the parts.

“ The passage in Tassoni, which has so often
 “ been cited by Scots writers, seems to imply not
 “ only that James, King of Scotland, had invented
 “ a new species of melody, but that *his melody* had
 “ been *imitated* by the Prince of Venosa; and this
 “ is the sense in which it has been understood by the
 “ Scots, and, indeed, by myself, till on finding no
 “ kind of similarity between the national tunes of
 “ North Britain, and the melodies of the Prince of
 “ Venosa, I examined the passage anew with more
 “ attention, when it appeared to me, as if Tassoni’s
 “ words did not imply that the Prince of Venosa
 “ had *adopted* or *imitated* the melodies of King
 “ James, but that these illustrious dilettanti were
 “ *equally* cultivators and *inventors* of music.”

“ The Prince of Venosa,” continues Dr. Burney,
 “ seems to merit as little praise on account of the
 “ expression of words, for which he has been cele-
 “ brated by Doni, as for his counterpoint.* For

* Il Principe Venosa con l'espressione di melodia potiva vestire qualsivoglia concetta. Trattato della Musica scenica, p. 1. cap. xvii.

"the syllables are constantly made long or short, just as it best suits his melody; and in the repetition of words, we frequently see the same syllable long in one bar and short in another; by which it is manifest, that their just accentuation was never thought of."

"The remarks of Tassoni certainly must have been hazarded either from conjecture or report, as is but too frequently practised by men of letters, when they become musical critics, without either industry or science sufficient to verify their assertions. The Prince of Venosa was perpetually straining at new expression and modulation, but seldom succeeded to the satisfaction of posterity, however dazzled his contemporaries may have been by his rank and character among the learned."

Burney concludes his account of this noble dilettante, with a very candid professional critique, in which the striking errors in his compositions are very clearly pointed out. Hence it appears, that the excellencies of this celebrated *amateur of fashion*, are all disputable; that the praises bestowed upon him are the voice of adulation, and not of truth; and that his *modulation*, so far from being the *sweetest conceivable*, (as it has been emphatically pronounced by his flatterers,) to ears accustomed to the

character and perfection of modern music, seems forced, harsh, affected, and disgusting.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

May 1, 1813.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED AND
CONCLUDED.

The Lombard School.

AT the head of the Lombard school of composition, Padre Martini very justly places Father COSTANZA PORTA of Cremona, a scholar of Willaert, and fellow-student with Zarlino. He was at first Maestro di Capella at Padua, next at Osimo, in the March of Ancona; then at Ravenna; and lastly at Loretto, where he died in 1601. He was author of eighteen different works for the church, abounding in curious and elaborate productions, which have been always admired by masters, and collectors of learned music. This author seems not only to have vanquish-

ed all the difficult contrivances, for which Jusquin del Prato, and Adrian Willaert, from whose school he sprung, were celebrated, but considerably augmented their number : for as orators, lawyers, and commentators, have the art of twisting and perverting words to any meaning, that favours their cause or hypothesis, so Costanza Porta had equal power over any series of musical notes, in a canon or fugue. In this faculty, he greatly resembled our TALLIS, his contemporary. He began to be in repute towards the latter end of the reign of Henry the Eighth. His five-part motets were first published at Venice in 1546, and the remainder of his works between that period and 1599.

In addition to Costanza Porta, and his scholars, the Lombard school can boast of many able and distinguished musicians during the latter end of the sixteenth century : among whom were Guiseppe Caimo, Giacomo Gastoldi, Guiseppe Biffi, and Gio. Paolo Cima, all voluminous Composers at Milan : together with Pietro Pontio, of Parma, Orazio Vecchi, of Modena ; and Claudio Monteverde, of Cremona.

GASTOLDI, sometimes called Castaldi, born at Caravaggio, was author of thirty musical works. Of these Dr. Burney had only seen his *Ballads*, printed at Antwerp, 1596, under the following title :

" *Balletti a 5. co i versè per cantare, sonare, e ballare: con una Mascherata de Cacciatori à 6. e un Concerto de Pastori, a 8.*"

This puts the derivation of our word *Ballad*, out of all doubt, which originally meant a song that was to be sung and danced at the same time. The tunes of Gastoldi are all very lively, and more graceful than any others that were composed previous to the cultivation of melody for the stage. The first edition of the Ballads, was published at Venice in 1591. Many of them are called *Fa, las*, under which silly title, our Morley, four years after, published short airs in five parts. Among the musicians above enumerated, VECCHI and MONTEVERDE are particularly entitled to notice, not only on account of their numerous compositions for the church and chamber, but also for their early attempts at dramatic music.

In this last capacity, their abilities will be considered hereafter: at present we shall only speak of their other productions.

ORAZIO VECCHI, born at Milan, and many years Maestro di Capella at Mantua, obtained a great reputation both as a musician and poet. His numerous canzonets, for three and four voices, published at Milan and Venice, from 1580 to 1613, were reprinted, and sung all over Europe. Our countryman, Peacham, who had received instruc-

tions in music from this composer, during his residence in Italy, speaks of him in the following manner. "I bring you now mine own master, Horatio Vecchi of Modena, who besides goodness of aire, "was most pleasing of all other, for his conceipt "and variety, wherewith all his works are singularly "beautified, as well his madrigals of five and "six parts, as those his canzonets printed at Norim- "berge." * He then instances and points out the beauties of several of his compositions, which were most in favour during that time. Besides secular music, Vecchi composed two books of *sacred songs*, in five, six, seven, and eight parts; *masses* for six and eight voices, and four-part *lamentations*.†

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDE, of Cremona, was one of the most eminent composers of the period now under consideration. He first distinguished himself

* See Complete Gentleman, p. 102.

† Sacrarum Cantionum, Ven. 1597. Messe, 1607, and Lamentationi, 1608. Milton is said, by his nephew Philips, in the Life which he prefixed to the English translation of his State Letters, to have collected, during his travels, a chest or two of choice music books of the best masters of Italy at that time, but particularly of Luca Marenzio, Monteverde, Orazio Vecchi, &c.

as a performer on the tenor viol; and being taken into the service of the Duke of Mantua, applied himself to the study of composition under the tuition of Marcantonio Ingegneri, of Cremona; Maestro di Capella of that court, and a considerable composer for the church. He soon after went to Venice, where the republic appointed him Maestro of St. Mark's Church, a station which has been always filled by professors of the greatest abilities. Here, in 1582, he published madrigals for three, four, and five voices, in the style of the times; but his courage increasing with experience, in his subsequent productions, he ventured to violate many rules of counterpoint which had been established by his predecessors. He had, therefore, as might be expected, many opponents, who treated him as an ignorant corruptor of the art. Musicians entered the lists on both sides, and the war became general. Monteverde defended himself in Prefaces and Letters, prefixed to his works; but his best defence was the revolution he effected in counterpoint: for his licenses pleasing the public ear, were soon adopted both by dilettanti and professors. As the innovations of Monteverde form a memorable epoch in the history of the art, it seems necessary to acquaint the musical reader in what they consisted. The laws of harmony, like those of tragedy, come-

dy, and epic poetry, when once firmly established, check invention, and frequently impel men of real genius to become imitators. Unluckily, musicians had not such perfect models before them, as antiquity has furnished to poets, in the dramatic works of Sophocles, Euripides, and Terence; and the epic poems of Homer and Virgil. In the infancy of musical composition, men saw but a little way into the latent resources of harmonic combinations; rules were formed upon few and narrow principles, derived from monotonous and insipid compositions, when timidity was feeling its way in the dark, and every deviation from the practice of the first contrapuntists was thought licentious.

Men, however, were too great friends to the pleasure of the ear, not to encourage such happy licenses as those with which Monteverde was charged: and since that time, every *fortunate breach* of an *old rule* has been regarded as the establishment of a *new*; by which means the code is so enlarged, that we may now almost pronounce every thing to be allowable in a musical composition, that is not offensive to cultivated ears. Monteverde was the first who used double discords, such as the 9-4, 9-7, and 7-2, as well as the flat-fifth, and seventh unprepared; and as he was possessed of more genius and science than the Prince of Venosa, his innovations

were not merely *praised* and then *avoided*, but on the contrary, *abused* and *adopted* by other composers.

But it was not merely by the use of these discords that he improved music: for by quitting ecclesiastical modulation in his secular productions, he determined the key of each movement, smoothed the melody, and made all his parts sing in a more natural and pleasing manner, than had been done by any of his predecessors.*

In the first set of Monteverde's madrigals, the composition is not only correct and simple, but so

* Monteverde, in composing for the church, adhered religiously to the tonal laws of ancient practice, *della prima pratica*, as appears by an *Agnus Dei*, from his mass, called "*In illo tempore*," for six voices, inserted by Padre Martini in the second part of his *Saggio di Contrap.* p. 242, which is constructed in strict fugue, with great purity of harmony and modulation. And as it was in his madrigals and operas that he ventured to violate such established rules of counterpoint as precluded variety, energy, pathos, and every bold expression of words, which has since been found so necessary in the picturesque and impassioned scenes of dramatic music; Padre Martini calls these licenses *la seconda pratica*, differing in many particulars from that of all the masters who preceded Monteverde.

dry and fanciless as to threaten no attempts at such new harmonies and effects, as would bring about a revolution in the art. And it seems to have been by design, and chiefly in his dramatic experiments upon the expression of words, that he ventured to violate ancient rules, and militate against prejudice and pedantry; for neither his church music, nor the two first books of his madrigals, contain any licenses, that could have offended or surprised orthodox ears, even in the *fifteenth* century. But in his fifth and last book of madrigals, almost every species of discord and modulation is hazarded; for the use of which, the boldest composers of modern times have been often thought licentious.

School of Bologna.

The works of but few practical musicians of this school, are preserved or recorded during the sixteenth century; though in the next, the masters of the cathedral of St. Petronio, and other professors of the city of BOLOGNA, were at least equal to those of the first class in any other part of Europe.

Florentine School.

Though neither the city of Florence, nor any part of Tuscany, is included among the schools into

which the music of Italy is usually classed, yet this, as well as every other science, is under great obligations to the activity, ingenuity, and talents of the inhabitants of this duchy; for it is well known, that the Florentines, under the auspices of the Medici family, at a time when the rest of Europe was immersed in barbarism, were the first to polish their own language, revive the ancient good taste of their ancestors, the Etruscans, in all the fine arts, and to disseminate their discoveries and improvements not only through other states of Italy, but almost every civilized nation of the world,

The reader has already been informed, that the most ancient melodies to Italian words were found in a collection of *Laudi Spirituali*, or Sacred Songs of Praise, produced and preserved at Florence; for the performance of which, a society, which still subsists, was formed in that city as early as the year 1310. It has likewise been shewn, how much music was cultivated, encouraged, and practised there in the time of BOCCACCIO, and the extraordinary abilities of two Florentine musicians in performing upon the organ, at the latter end of the same century, have likewise been recorded.

These, though no other were to be found, would be sufficient proofs that the Florentines could not justly be anathematized by the other Italian states

for being unmusical ; as there is no period in their history, since the inventions of their countryman, GUIDO D'ARESSO, in which they have not contributed their share towards the cultivation and performance of good music. We have already observed, in a former letter, in how many parts the Canti Carnascialeschi, or Carnival songs, were sung through the streets of Florence in the time of Lorenzo il Magnifico ; and to the history of music there during that gay and happy period, may be added the favour of Antonio Squarcialuppi, organist of the Duomo, not only with that prince, but also with his fellow-citizens ; who, in consideration of his great musical talents, erected a monument to his memory in their cathedral, of which he was organist, with the following inscription, which Dr. Burney copied on the spot in the year 1770.

“ Multum profecto debet musica Antonio Squarcialupo, Organistæ. Is enim ita gratiam conjunxit, ut quartam sibi viderentur Charites musicam adscivisse Sororem. Florentia Civitas grati animi officium rata ejus memoriam propagare, cujus manus sæpe mortales in dulcem admirationem adduxerat, civi suo monumentum donavit.”

The learned and elegant Politian, tutor to Leo the Tenth, and the other children of Lorenzo il Magnifico, who left among his works a Discourse

on Music, is said to have died in the act of playing on the lute, in 1494. We shall have further occasion to speak of this illustrious Tuscan, in tracing the origin of the musical drama in Italy.

FRANCESCO CORTECCIA, a celebrated organist and composer, was Maestro di Capella to the Grand Duke, Cosmo the Second, thirty years. He published in his youth, at Venice, a set of Madrigals for four voices; afterwards Motets; and lastly, *Responsoria et lectiones Hebdomadae Sanctae*. His merit, however, has been over-rated. He was succeeded at the court of Florence by the renowned *Alessandro Striggio*, a lutenist, and voluminous composer, whom our Morley frequently mentions, and cites in his *Introduction*.

This musician is much commended by Garzonius, in his *Piazza Universale*, and by the historians of Italian poetry, Crescimbeni, and Quadrio, as one of the earliest composers for the stage. His Madrigals in six parts, were published at Venice in 1566. A copy of these is preserved in the Christ Church Collection at Oxford. Dr. Burney's opinion, who had examined his productions, is, that compared with the best compositions of his time, they would only be allowed, perhaps, to be good for a dilettante.

VINCENZO GALILEI also was a Florentine: it is therefore indisputable, that Florence was not defi-

cient in men of abilities, either in the theory or practice of music, during the time that the inhabitants of other parts of Italy began to distinguish themselves in the art. But besides the works of such musicians as have been classed under the several schools of Italy, there are many excellent productions of this high period preserved in the collections of the curious, by Italian composers, the particular place of whose birth and residence has not been recorded. Among these, there is one, who, for his genius and abilities, is well entitled to a place in every history of music: this is CONSTANTIUS FESTA, of whose works Dr. Burney has inserted in his work two excellent examples, a motet, and a madrigal.

There is also a motet by this ancient master inserted in the fourth book of *Motelli della Corona*, which was printed as early as 1519, ten years before the birth of Palestrina; and in the third book of *Arkadelt's Madrigals*, printed at Venice in 1541, there are seven compositions of Costanzo Festa, which, in point of rhythm, grace, and facility, exceed every contemporary production. He appears, indeed, to have been the most able contrapuntist of Italy during this early period, and, with the exceptions of Palestrina and Constantius Porta, of any period anterior to that of CARISSIMI.

And now, having traced the progress which the

inhabitants of the several states of Italy had made in music as far as the end of the sixteenth century, we shall quit, for the present, this elegant, ingenious, and enthusiastic people, and endeavour to describe the improvements which the art received about the same time in other parts of Europe.

LETTER XXVIII.

May 7th, 1813.

PROGRESS OF MUSIC IN GERMANY, DURING THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

THE inhabitants of this extensive empire have so long considered music as an indispensable part of general education, and able professors of all countries have been so eminently patronized by its princes, whose passion for the art, and establishments in its favour, have at all times powerfully stimulated genius in its votaries, that they are at least entitled to the second place among its most successful cultivators. Their *instrumental* music is, at the present day, decidedly superior to that of any other country in Europe, as we have continually an opportunity of

witnessing in the unrivalled productions of Haydn, Mozart, and many other composers of the last and present centuries. But though treatises innumerable, written during the sixteenth century on the subject of music, are preserved, yet it would be extremely difficult to furnish specimens of composition equally ancient, though much was produced: for the Germans appear as fickle as the Italians in their musical taste, and have been still more willing to consign their old authors to untimely neglect and oblivion.

The mere names of theorists, whose works are no longer read, and of practical musicians, whose compositions have entirely perished, can afford little entertainment or instruction. We shall not, therefore, attempt to withdraw the veil of obscurity in which they are enveloped; observing, by the way, that Henry Isaac, a very eminent German contrapuntist, flourished in the fifteenth century, before the Italians had particularly distinguished themselves in the art.

Quadrio informs us, that he was Maestro di Cappella of the church of St. Giovanni, at Florence, and the first who, in different ballad airs, set the songs of Lorenzo de Medici in three parts, for a processional masquerade. He flourished about 1475.

And we are told that *Bernhard*, a German, so early as the year 1470, invented *pedals for the organ* at Venice; a discovery which reflects great honour

upon the organists of Germany, as it implies ideas of harmony and effects beyond the power and compass of human hands : in the use of which, the difficulties had been so entirely vanquished, as to allow the player to superadd to his performance those which the feet could simultaneously execute. This fact is not only related by German writers, but also by Sabellicus, an Italian, Bernhard's contemporary, who resided at Venice at the time of the invention.*

Several particulars concerning the use of music in Germany during the sixteenth century, may be gathered from Montagne, who travelled through that country in 1580. At Kempten, in Bavaria, he says, that "the Catholic Church of this city, which is
 " Lutheran, is well served: for on Thursday morning,
 " though it was not an holyday, mass was celebrated

* As many of our readers may be unacquainted with the construction and use of pedals, though now almost universally attached to church organs, and frequently also to those intended for private use, it may be necessary to observe, that they resemble and act as the keys of the instrument with which they are connected, and when played upon with the feet, strike the notes in the lower octave, leaving the hands of the performer at liberty to execute as many parts in the upper end as they can reach, while the pedals are playing the bass.

" in the Abbey, without the gates, in the same manner as at *Notre Dame*, at Paris, on Easter Day, with music and organs, at which none but the priesthood were present."

At the church of the Lutherans, Montagne heard one of the ministers preach to a very thin congregation. " When he had finished, a psalm was sung, in German likewise, to a melody, a little different from ours. At each stave, the organ, which had been but lately erected, played admirably, making a kind of response to the singing."* This is an early instance of the use of *interludes* in accompanying psalmody on the organ.

" As a new-married couple," continues Montagne, " went out of church, the violins and tabors attended them."†

This circumstance is mentioned to prove, that the violin was then a common instrument in Germany. At Lansperg, the same author tells us, that " the town clock, like many others in this country, struck quarters, et dict-on que celui de Nuremberg sonne les minutes." This is likewise an early proof of *chimes*, in Bavaria, whence they are said to have

* *Journal d'un Voyage*, tom. 1. pp. 102 s. 106.

† *Les Violens* (not *Violles*) et Tambourins.

been brought into the Low Countries. It is here that this author gives an account of the *Cantor*, or Chanter, who directs the singing in Lutheran churches. "Two seats are placed, one for the minister and the preacher, when there is one, and another below for the person who leads off the psalm. After each verse the congregation waits till he has pitched and begun the text; then they all sing together, *pele mele*, right or wrong, as loud as they can." In addition to theoretical writers on music and composers, the talents and abilities of innumerable practical musicians and performers of this early period have been recorded by various authors, particularly by Luscinius and Ornithoparchus. This last author dedicates the fourth book of his *Micrologus* to Arnold Shlink, a celebrated blind organist in the service of the Count Palatine. But great organs and eminent organists seem for upwards of two centuries to have been the natural growth of Germany. The organ which is still in use in St. Martin's Church in Groningen, in North Holland, and of which some of the stops, says Dr. Burney, "are composed of the sweetest toned pipes I ever heard," was partly made by the celebrated Rodolph Agricola the elder.

RODOLPH AGRICOLA, who died in the flower of his age, in 1485, was a prodigy in literature and

science. Vossius says, he was a great philosopher; that he understood Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and was a great musician. Walther, that he not only set to music in four parts, many hymns in his *mother tongue*, but played on the lute and sung admirably. Erasmus, in a pompous eulogium, places him among the first of mortals. But Agricola himself thought little of his fame, and published none of his own works, which were, however, very numerous. Cardinal Bembo regarded him as the first man of his age; and Paul Jovius expressly says, that Agricola shamed the Jews for Hebrew, and the Athenians and Romans by his Greek and Latin. He was born at Baston, a small town in Friesland, near Groningen, and died at 43. Melchior Adam extends his praises so far as to say, that in eloquence he had the cadence of Lactantius, the period of Pliny, the penetration of Socrates, the richness and variety of Cicero, the points and subtilty of Quintilian, and the vehemence and prejudices of St. Cyprian. Several other celebrated Germans of the name of Agricola have also contributed to the progress of music, by their writings and compositions, particularly Martin and Alexander Agricola, the first having published from 1529 to 1556, when he died, many very useful theoretical tracts; and the latter in the

beginning of the same century, according to Sebaldus Heyden, was an excellent composer.

From the time of Rodolph Agricola to the present day, the number of organbuilders, whose names are well known to the admirers of that noble instrument in Germany, is hardly credible in any other country.

But to convince the English reader what a serious concern the erection of an organ is in this part of the world, we shall conclude our account of the progress of music in Germany, during the sixteenth century, by relating the manner in which the magistrates of Groningen contracted with David Beck of Halberstadt, to construct an organ for the Castle Church of that city. In the year 1592, articles were drawn up between the magistrates and organ-builder, in which it was agreed by the former, that for an instrument, the contents of which were minutely described, a certain stipulated sum should be paid to the latter upon its completion, provided it was approved after trial and examination by such organists as they should nominate for that purpose. This instrument in its construction employed the builder four years; and in 1596 the most eminent organists in Germany being invited, the names of all those who signed the certificate of approbation, amounting to fifty-three in number, are recorded in a book

STATE OF MUSIC IN FRANCE AND SPAIN, &c. 51
called *Organum Gruxingense redicivum*, published
by Andrew Werckmeister in 1706*.

LETTER XXIX.

May 8, 1813.

STATE OF MUSIC IN FRANCE AND SPAIN, DURING
THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

France.

THE inhabitants of this kingdom, though ever active in the cultivation of the arts, made but small progress in any of them, if we except the art of war, during the sixteenth century. "Before the reign of

* This organist and voluminous writer on music, who was born in 1645, was appointed by the father of the late King of Prussia, Inspector-General of all the organ work in his dominions. He published two books called **ORGEL PROBE**, which are very curious and instructive, concerning the history and construction of organs in Germany.

“ Francis the First,” says Perrault, in his preface to the Translation of Vitruvius, “ nothing was “ esteemed worthy of attention by the king and “ nobles of France that was not military; and it “ seems as if the chace, tilts, and tournaments, and “ the game of chess, which are all images of war, “ had been the only amusements which they were “ capable of tasting: dancing itself was only animated by the fife and drum, and architecture gave “ no other form to their palaces than that of a fortress.” Even during the reign of this active and splendid Prince, from 1515 to 1547, music does not seem to have received much improvement, either in the court or kingdom of France. According to *Marot*, however, the spinet appears to have been an instrument in common use among the French ladies at this time; for in the dedication of the version of the psalms to his fair countrywomen, he tells them, that he hopes divine hymns will supersede *love songs* and fill their apartments with the praises of Jehovah, in accompanying them on the *spinet*.

“ E vos doights sur les espinettes,

“ Pour dire SAINTES CHANSONNETTES.”

See *Œuvres de Clement Marot*, a Lyon, 1551.

The names of fewer composers of eminence in France during the reign of Francis the First and his

successors in the sixteenth century, have been preserved, than in those of contemporary princes in Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, and England; and even Mons. La Borde, a very diligent and patriotic inquirer, has furnished us with but few examples of counterpoint, produced in France previous to the seventeenth century *. Orlando di Lasso, born at Mons, whom we have classed in the Flemish School; and Claude le Jeune, a native of Valenciennes, who in downright courtesy is granted to France, are the chief composers of the preceding century, of whose works he has exhibited examples, except Charles d'Helfer, whose country or period of existence is neither to be found in Mons. La Borde's work nor in any other †.

* *Essai sur la Musique.*

† Mons was under the dominion of the Spaniards till the year 1696, when it was taken by Lewis the Fourteenth, but was restored at the peace of Ryswick; and belonged to the Emperor till the French Revolution, since which time it has been included within the French empire.

Valenciennes belonged also to the House of Austria till 1677, when it was surrendered to Lewis the Fourteenth.

Rabelais' list of celebrated musicians of his acquaintance, would have furnished more names for France : among these, however, Ludovico Guicciardini has claimed the most eminent for the Netherlands *. Yet this paucity of French musicians cannot have been occasioned by any sudden paroxysm of mental relaxation, indolence, or insensibility ; for not only during the middle and lower ages, but even since the arrival of Lulli in France to the present times, their national poetry and music have been cultivated, cherished, and pursued with a degree of ardour and passion that has hardly ever been equalled in any other nation. The truth is, that from the death of Francis the First, to the total suppression of the LEAGUE in the time of Henry the Fourth, the kingdom never enjoyed that internal peace, and domestic tranquillity, which are essential to the cultivation of the liberal arts ; for during this unhappy period, the inveterate enmity of Spain, and the implacable fury of bigotry and fanaticism which involved the nation in a civil war of forty years, must have been invincible impediments to the progress, and even use of music ; which, among all the mi-

* See *Descrit. di tutti i Paesi Bassi*. Anversa, 1588, p. 42.

raculous powers ascribed to it by the ancients, has never been found to drive away the evil spirits of party rage and religious rancour.

During the reign of Francis the First, which was frequently turbulent and unfortunate, though we hear but of few great musicians at his capital, yet so many excellent masters of harmony subsisted, particularly in the Low Countries, that MUSIC IN PARTS became common throughout Europe. Contemporary with Francis, flourished Clement Jannequin, a celebrated French composer: a curious production of his called *La Bataille*, printed in the tenth book of *French Songs for four Voices or Instruments*, is preserved in the British Museum. This song was written and set on occasion of the famous and obstinate battle of Marignan, which lasted two days, and was fought during the first year of Francis the First, 1515, between the French and Swiss, who disputed their passage to the Milanese. As the whole title of this book of songs suggests reflections upon the state of music at this early period, different from any which there has yet been occasion to make, it seems to merit insertion here.

“ Le dixiesme livre des Chansons, contenant la
 “ Bataille, à 4, de Clement Jannequin, avec la cin-
 “ quiesme partie de Philippe Verdelot, si placé, et
 “ deux chasses du lievre à 4 parties, et le Chant des
 “ Oiseaux à 3, 1545.

- " La bataille, ou defaite des | à 4, ou, à 5, Clem.
 " Suisses, à la Journée de Marignan | Jannequin.
 " Le Chant des oiseaux à 3 - Nic. Gombert.
 " La Chasse du lievre à 4 - Incognito Authore.
 " La Chasse du lievre à 4 - Nic. Gombert."

In the BATTLE PIECE, which as well as each of the compositions printed with it, is at least as long as seven or eight of the songs contained in the other books of this collection; there are several movements, in each of which the noise and din of war, during this memorable conflict, are imitated. In the song of birds, and in each composition called the chase, or hunting of the hare, the composers have severally endeavoured to express the words with some degree of exactness. Here then, though in a clumsy manner, musical imitation appears to be attempted for the first time. And our countryman, Ravenscroft, a hundred years later, has not been more successful in his harmony for four voices, when he tries to express "the pleasure of the five usual recreations of *hunting, hawking, dancing, drinking, and enamouring.*"*

* These compositions are given by Ravenscroft, in illustration of the doctrine contained in his "*Brief Discourse,*" published, 1614.

RONSARD, the favourite bard of France, during the reigns of Henry the Second, Francis the Second, Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, had his songs frequently set to music, particularly by ANTHONY BERTRAND, who published them in four parts in 1578, under the title of *Amours de Ronsard*; and by FRANCIS REGNARD, in four and five parts, in 1579.

This was during the life of the poet, whose decease did not happen till 1585, when he was honoured with a public and magnificent funeral, at which the eloquent Cardinal du Perron pronounced an oration; and the first personages of the kingdom attended in such numbers, that the Cardinal de Bourbon, and many other princes and nobles, were obliged to return, after attempting in vain to penetrate the crowd, in order to join the procession.

The burial service on this occasion was new set, *en musique nombrée*, that is, to music in parts, in florid counterpoint, accompanied with instruments, instead of *canto fermo*; and was performed by the best singers in France, those in his Majesty's service being there by command: the King justly lamenting the death of a person, who had been so great an ornament to his kingdom. It is also said by the biographers of this poet, that he was extremely fond of music, and sung agreeably.

But another poet of great reputation at this time, and a friend of Ronsard, John Anthony Baif, set his own verses to music: not to such as might be expected from a man of letters, or a dilettante, consisting of a single melody, but to counterpoint or music in parts. Of this description, he published in 1561, twelve hymns or spiritual songs; and in 1578, several books of songs, all in four parts, of which both the words and the music were his own. When men of learning condescend to study music *scientifically*, professors think the art highly honoured by their notice: but poets are very unwilling to return the compliment, and seldom allow a musician to climb Parnassus, or set his foot within the precincts of their dominions. Baif was generally allowed to be as good a musician as a poet; and what entitles him to honourable mention here is, that he established an academy, or concert, at his house in the suburbs of Paris, where the performances were frequently honoured with the presence of Charles the Ninth, Henry the Third, and the principal personages of the court.

Charles the Ninth, of whose reign even French Roman Catholics are now ashamed, was as fond of music as Ptolemy Auletes, Nero, our Henry the Eighth, and several other monsters upon record, whose hearts it could not subdue. Many musicians were patro-

nised by this king, particularly Francis Costeley, his valet de chambre and organist; Adrian le Roy, a lutenist; and Stephen, a singer, both brothers-in-law to Ballard, the first printer of music in France; with GRANIER, who composed hymns, proses, canticles, and songs, some of which he dedicated to Queen Margaret, sister to Charles the Ninth. Mersennus gives a curious description of a viol, sufficiently spacious to contain young pages, who sung the treble of enchanting airs, while he who played the bass part, sung the tenor, in order to form a complete concert in three parts, such as Granier and others used to perform in the presence of Queen Margaret. Besides these musicians, ANTOINE SUBIET, surnamed *Cardot*, a singer, stood so high in this prince's favour, that in the year 1572, so fatal to the Hugonots, he made him Bishop of Montpellier.

This seems the place to speak of poor GOUBIMEL, the greatest musician in France at that time, whose compositions are now become so scarce, that his name and reputation are preserved by Protestant historians, rather in pity to his misfortunes than from any knowledge of the excellence of his works, which are now only in the hands of tradition. Of the psalms, and tragical end of this musician, an account has already been given; and his history is here

resumed, in consequence of the claim which the French lay to him, as a native of their country, which might well be disputed, as Franche Comté, the place of his birth, was not conquered by Lewis the Fourteenth, till 1668, more than a century after Goudimel was massacred at Lyons.

Another eminent psalmodist, and follower of Calvin, whom the French rank among their best composers of the sixteenth century, was CLAUDIN, or CLAUDE LE JEUNE, a native of Valenciennes. Though *Le Jeune* was his family name, and not added to Claude, merely to distinguish him from Claude Goudimel, these composers are frequently confounded. Claude le Jeune was not only in the service of Henry the Fourth, but in high favour at the court of his predecessor, Henry the Third, particularly in the year 1581, when, at the wedding of the Duc de Joyeuse, his music is said by several writers of the times to have produced marvellous effects. Thomas d'Embry, his intimate friend, and who had the story from Claude himself, relates what happened upon this occasion, in a less questionable shape than the rest. " This great musician (says he) at first caused a spirited air to be sung, which so animated a gentleman who was present, that he clapped his hand on his sword, and swore it was impossible for him to refrain from fighting with

“ the first person he met ; upon which Claude caused another air to be performed, of a soothing kind, which immediately restored him to his natural temperament. Such power (continues he) have the inflexions of voice over the affections.”

The works of Claude le Jeune consisted chiefly of miscellaneous songs and psalms, *de Melanges des Chansons, des Pseaumes*, of which he published many books. His *Melanges* consist of songs and motets, in French, Italian, and Latin. His songs are principally French, and in many parts like the madrigals of Italy. Of his Psalms, an account has already been given.

In comparing his productions with those of the best contemporary composers of Italy and the Netherlands, he appears to have been a man of study and labour, unendowed with genius or facility.

The LUTE was the most favourite and general instrument in France, as well as in other parts of Europe, towards the close of the sixteenth century. James and Charles Hedington, natives of Scotland, are said to have been excellent performers upon it, and much in favour with Henry the Fourth. That most amiable prince, though he is not said either to have understood or felt music, had the art of attaching his servants by his condescension and benevo-

62 STATE OF MUSIC IN FRANCE AND SPAIN,

leave, more effectually than other monarchs by temporary rapture or boundless munificence.

Juhen Perichon was another celebrated lutenist, whose performance seemed more agreeable to Henry than that of any other.

THE VIOLIN seems to have been brought into favour at the court of France, before any honourable mention is made of it elsewhere, by the arrival of BALTAZARINI, a great performer on that instrument; who, at the head of a *band of violin players*, was sent from Piedmont, by Marshal Brissac, to Catherine of Medicis, and appointed by that princess her first valet-de chambre, and superintendent of her musical establishment.*

* The violin, with *four* strings, is an instrument of much later invention than the *treble-viol* with six strings, now entirely out of use. Galilei says (Dial. p. 147,) that "both the violin and violoncello were invented by the Italians, perhaps by the Neapolitans." Corelli's violin, afterwards in the possession of Signor Giardini, was made in 1578, and the case painted by Annibal Carracci, probably long after the violin was finished, at which time Annibal was but eight years old. Montagne, who was at Verona in 1580, says, that there were organs and *violins* to accompany the mass in the great church.

Baltazarini having greatly contributed to the amusement of the royal family and nobility, by his

M. Bonnet, in his patriotic *Hist. de la Musique, et de ses Effets*, tom. 1. p. 212, however unwilling he was to allow Italian music to be superior to that of his own country, in an unguarded moment, makes two very important concessions in favour of Italy; first, by acknowledging, that the most curious books and manuscripts in the *Bibliothèque du Roi* were brought thither by Queen Catharine de Medicis from Florence, from the collection of her great-grandfather, Lorenzo il Magnifico; secondly, that what contributed most to the perfection of music in France, was the great number of Italian musicians who followed that princess, and excited emulation in his countrymen: it was then that they began to change their rude and simple method, in order to conform, in some measure, to the delicacy of the Italians, both in vocal and instrumental music. To the conclusion of this period, few of the present patrons of Italian music, or even (if such still exist) the exclusive admirers of Rameau, will perhaps subscribe, when he says, that “since the time of Catharine de Medicis, music in France was brought to the highest perfection possible, by the great genius of Signor Lulli, the most celebrated musician we have ever had in our country.” Such is the transient state of this art, that as soon as a new style is

ingenuity in suggesting magnificent plans, machinery, and decorations, for ballets, *divertissemens*, and other dramatic representations, obtained the quaint title of *Beaux-joyeux*, by which he ever after continued to be called; and Henry the Third having, in 1581, married his favourite minion, the Duc de Joyeuse, to Mademoiselle de Vaudemont, sister to his queen, Louise de Lorraine, almost ruined his kingdom in balls, masquerades, tilts, tournaments, and every other species of expensive festivity that could be devised on the occasion.*

in fashion, it seems necessary for a country not only to burn all the old music, but even the books in which it is intemperately commended!

* Il y eut chaque jour des divertissemens nouveaux, qui consistoient en concerts, bals, mascarades, combats à pied, et à cheval, Joûtes, tournois, et generalement tout ce qu'on peut imaginer pour contribuer au plaisir d'une cour la plus magnifique, et la plus galante qu'on eut jamais vû en France, dont la dépense fut estimé monter a pres de quatre mllions. Menestrier des Représentations en Musique, p. 192; and Hist. de la Musique, tom. i, p. 217.

A more modern French writer estimates the expense of this fete at six millions of the present French livres, equal to 250,000l. sterling.

The queen likewise, in honour of her sister's nuptials, gave an entertainment at the Louvre, in which a ballet was exhibited, called *Ceres and her Nymphs*, which was then a new kind of *spectacle* in France, avec une grande musique, composed by the celebrated Claude le Jeune. The *Entrées de balets* in this fête were invented by Baltazar de Beaujoyeuse, the famous Piedmontese performer on the violin, who published an account of his inventions in a book, now become extremely scarce. The only copy Dr. Burney ever saw of this work, was purchased, as he informs us, at the sale of the late Honourable Topham Beauclerk's library, and is thus entitled: "Balet comique de la Royne, faict aux nopces de Monsieur le Duc de Joyeuse et Mademoiselle de Vaudemont sa sœur. Par Baltazar de Beaujoyeux, Valet-du-Chambre du Roy, et de la Royne, sa mere. A Paris, 1582. Par Adrian le Roy et Robert Ballard." The types and paper are equal in beauty to those of Elzevir in the next century: "and the music," continues Burney, "though cut in wood, is much more clear and neat than any I ever saw of the kind." The description of this balet, which is printed in quarto, and dedicated to the King, Henry the Third, is preceded by innumerable copies of complimentary verses to the author, in Latin and French, all in the

inflated style of the times. In his preface, Beaujoyeux tells us, that " he had blended together
 " poetry, music, and dancing, in a manner which,
 " if ever done before, must have been in such re-
 " mote antiquity, that it may now fairly be called
 " new : as the ancients never recited verses without
 " music, so Orpheus never played without song. I
 " have, however, given the *first place* to DANCING—
 " *J'ay toutefois donné le premier titre, et honneur*
 " *à la Danse, &c.* and assigned the second and
 " third to poetry and music, in order to gratify at
 " once, the eye, the ear, and the understanding."

Hence we may trace the origin of the *Ballet Revolu-
 que*, as well as the *Ballet Historique*, in France,
 where dancing has long been more successfully cul-
 tivated than elsewhere, and where it still most deci-
 dedly holds the *first place* on the stage. It were a
 vain imagination now to expect any musical drama
 to succeed in France without dancing, either inter-
 wove in its texture, or introduced between the acts.
 And, unfortunately for music, the theatres in other
 parts of Europe have so far adopted the *costume* of
 the French stage, that no opera, however excellent
 in respect to poetry, composition, and perform-
 ance, can support itself without the aid of such
 splendid ballets as double the expense of the exhibi-
 tion.

What the dancing at the superb and costly fête described by Beaujoyeux may have been, cannot now be ascertained: but of the music, which is pointed, we are enabled to judge; "and this," says Barney, who had taken the trouble to score a great part of it, both vocal and instrumental, "is truly contemptible, even for the period in which it was composed."

In the operas of Lulli and Rameau, the music of the dances was always infinitely more admired by foreigners, than that which was sung, because it was necessarily more marked and accented; that is, in what was danced, some determined measure and movement was always perceptible; but this was so far from being the case, in what was sung, that it is related of Faustina, the celebrated singer, and wife of the composer Hasse, that in her way through Paris to England, being carried to the serious French opera, she remained silent there full half an hour, and then exclaimed—"But when shall we have an air?"

So confounded were airs and recitatives together at this theatre, it was a natural enquiry for an Italian to make. But had this excellent performer heard the music to Beaujoyeux's ballet, which was composed long before the invention of recitative, she might have asked the same question; for it contains nothing resembling an air, or which seems to imply

a selection of notes, or to suggest a reason for one sound being higher or lower, quicker or slower, than another.

It must be remembered, that the music of this old French balet was not composed by Baltazarini, the Italian, who only acted as balet-master on the occasion, but by Messrs. de Beaulieu and Salmon, of the King's Band, whom his Majesty had ordered to assist him in composing and preparing all that was *most perfect* in music for this festival; "and M. Beaulieu," says Baltazarini, "whom all professors regard as an excellent musician, has, on this occasion, even surpassed himself, assisted by Maistre Salmon. whom Monsieur Beaulieu and others highly esteem in his art."

The instruments employed in the performance of this music were soft organs, "*des orgues douces*," hautboys, cornets, sacbouttes, *violoncelli*, lutes, lyres, harps, flutes, and le flageolet, played by le Sieur JUVIGNY, its original inventor.

Dix Violins are said to come in, five of a side, *pour joier la premiere entrée du balet*. These violins seem merely introduced to play to the dancers, without being suffered to accompany the singing, or to join in the concerts or symphonies. This performance, however wretched, is the only French theatrical music extant of that early period; and, in

in comparing it with the subsequent compositions of Lulli, we find that he did not disdain to comply with the national taste, which had been long established, in respect to measure and melody: he certainly added much to both, but prudently conformed to the character and prejudices of his patrons.

Francis Eustache DU CAURROY, born 1549, was the most celebrated musician of his time, being called by his contemporaries, *le prince des professeurs de musique*—the prince of musicians. He was Maestro di Capella to Charles the Ninth, Henry the Third, and Henry the Fourth; Canon of the Holy Chapel at Paris, and Prior of *St. Aioul de Provins*.

This composer was very much beloved by the learned and elegant Cardinal du Perron; who not only wrote verses frequently for him to set to music, but after his decease, in 1609, honoured his memory with an epitaph, which is inscribed on his tomb, near the pulpit of the church *des grands Augustins*.

This tomb is said to have been erected by the successor of Du Caurroy, Nicholas Formé. An act of generosity, so uncommon, deserves to be recorded, however difficult it may be to produce testimonies of his musical abilities. The compositions, however, of Du Caurroy, appear con-

70 STATE OF MUSIC IN FRANCE AND SPAIN,

temptable to professors of the present day, and no way correspond with the expectation excited by his noble patron and panegyrist.

JACQUES MAUDUIT is said to have been a great musician in the time of Henry the Fourth, and to have accompanied wonderfully on the lute.

Pere Mersenne, who had a particular regard for this artist, has given us an engraved head and eulog of him in his *Harmonie Universelle*; with an extract from which we will close our account of the state of music in France, during the sixteenth century.

“ Jacques Mauduit, descended from a noble family, was born 1557. He had a liberal education, and travelled during his youth into Italy, where he learned the language of that country, together with Spanish and German; which, with the literature he had acquired at college, enabled him to read the best authors on every subject. He had a general knowledge of most sciences, as well as of mechanics; and, studying music with unwearied diligence, without any other assistance than that of books, rendered himself so eminent, that he was honoured, even during his life, with the respectable title of *pere de musique*—father of music. And with reason,” continues his panegyrist, “ being the inventor of good music in France, by the many excellent works he pub-

lished, both vocal and instrumental, which have been long the ornament of our concerts. His merit obtained him admission into the famous Academy of Music, instituted by the learned Baif, in 1588: and many writers of his time seem to have produced their poetical illusions, in order to have them immortalized by the airs of Mauduit.

The first composition, in which he distinguished himself as a learned harmonist, was his Mass of *Requiem*, which he set for the funeral of his friend, the celebrated poet, Ronsard. It was afterwards performed at the funeral of Henry the Fourth; and lastly, at his own, in 1627, under the direction of his son, Louis Mauduit, on which occasion Pere Mersenne himself officiated in the sacred function, as priest.

Mauduit left behind him innumerable Masses, Hymns, Motets, Fancies, and Songs. A small hereditary place in the Court of Requests descended to him from his father, which he seemed to exercise to no other purpose, than to oblige and serve his friends.

At the siege of Paris, when the Fauxbourg was taken by storm, he ventured through the victorious soldiers to the house of his friend Baif,

“ then dead, and saved all his manuscripts at the
 “ hazard of his own life.

“ Upon a similar occasion, in which there was
 “ still greater difficulty and danger, he saved the
 “ *douze modes* of Claude le Jeune, and his other
 “ manuscript works, at the time when this com-
 “ poser was seized at the gate of St. Denys, as a
 “ Hugonot: so that all those who have since re-
 “ ceived pleasure from the productions of this ex-
 “ cellent master, are indebted to Mauduit for their
 “ preservation, as he saved them from destruction,
 “ by seizing the arm of a sergeant, in the very act
 “ of throwing them into the flames; persuading
 “ the soldiery, that these papers were perfectly in-
 “ nocent, and free from Calvinistical poison, or
 “ any other kind of treason against the league: and
 “ it was likewise by his zeal and address, with the
 “ assistance of an officer of his acquaintance, that
 “ Claude escaped with his life.”

Such are the praises bestowed on Jaques Mau-
 duit by his friend, the learned and benign Pere
 Mersenne, whose diligence, science, and candour,
 far surpassed his taste.

The Requiem, by Mauduit, is printed in the
Harmonie Universelle, in five separate parts; but
 neither the harmony nor modulation present any
 thing, that is either curious or uncommon.

It is literally *plain* counterpoint of crotchets, and minims moving all together, as in our cathedral chanting; and its chief merit consists in the exact accentuation of the words, *à l'antique*; a minim for a long syllable, and a crotchet for a short one.

Mersennus, says Dr. Burney, in his Commentary on Genesis, has illustrated his musical remarks with many of his friend Mauduit's compositions. Whence, however, he has not been able to extract the least fragment, that would do honour either to this composer, or his country.

Spain.

The Spaniards appear to have been placed lower among European musicians, than in equity they ought, by those who imagine MORALES to have been the *first* practical musician of eminence in that country, and SALINAS the *only* theorist produced there during the sixteenth century. We know but little indeed of the state of music in the interior of that kingdom during this period; but, if we may judge, by the musicians it furnished to the Papal chapel, both as singers and composers, we may conclude that the richest and most powerful nation in Europe, would not breed musicians as the Africans do slaves, or the Circassians women, merely to transport them

for the use and pleasure of others, without keeping a few at home for their own amusement.

The Spaniards, so far from neglecting music, seem to have admitted it very early into the circle of sciences in their universities; for Salinas tells us, that the musical professorship which was conferred on him at Salamanca, had been founded and endowed by Álfonzo, King of Castile, surnamed the Wise.*

And Bartolomeo Ramis, the celebrated opponent of Franchinus, in 1482, was public professor of music at Toledo, and afterwards at Bologna. Dr. Burney enumerates a long list of writers on the subject of music, who appeared in Spain before Salinas: the mere *names* of Theorists have but little interest, and are therefore purposely omitted.

FRANCIS SALINAS, a native of Burgos, in Spain, was blind from his infancy. His parents considering that he might pursue the study of music, notwithstanding this calamity, caused him very early to be instructed in singing, and to play upon the organ. It was by mere accident that he acquired any ac-

* This Prince, who reigned from 1252 to 1284, was the great astronomer whence the Alphonzine Tables had their name.

quaintance with the learned languages: for, while he was a boy, a young woman celebrated for her knowledge in the Latin tongue, and who intended to take the veil, having a great desire to learn to play on the organ, came to his father's house, and in return for the lessons which she received from Salinas in music, taught him Latin. After this, he was so eager to pursue the study of literature, that he prevailed on his parents to send him to Salamanca, where, during some years, he applied closely to the study of the Greek language, philosophy, and the arts in general. When we bear in mind that he was totally blind, his faculties must have been of a most extraordinary description, to have vanquished the additional difficulties to which this circumstance necessarily subjected him. But after some time, as may naturally be imagined, being unable to support himself any longer in that university, he was introduced in the King's palace to Peter Sarmientus, Archbishop of Compostelle, who received and treated him very kindly; and being soon after created a Cardinal, carried Salinas with him to Rome.

Here he had not only an opportunity of conversing with the learned, but also of consulting ancient manuscripts, particularly those on music, in the Greek language, which have been since collected and published by Meibomius and Dr. Wallis. In

these studies he spent thirty years, when the death of his patrons, Cardinal Carpensius, Cardinal Burgos, and the Viceroy of Naples, by whom, he says, he was more beloved than enriched, determined him to return to Spain, and pass the remainder of his days in humble obscurity; but on his arrival at Salamanca, he was appointed public professor of music, and gave lectures in that university both on the theory and practice of the art.

Salinas is said to have been an admirable performer on the organ, an instrument, which seems peculiarly happy in its construction for the display of great musical talents, after the privation of sight: for not only Salinas, but Francesco Cieco, the first great organist upon record; Pothoff, the late excellent organist at Amsterdam; and our own Stanley, who delighted the admirers of that instrument more than fifty years, seem, with respect to their performance, rather to have gained than lost by this calamity. Milton, we are told, could *amuse* himself; and Handel, we know, had the power of delighting others upon the organ after total blindness, though it came on late in life. Salinas died in 1590, at seventy-seven years of age.

The number of singers and composers, employed in the Pontifical Chapel at Rome only, if their names were inserted here, would furnish a list of

Spanish musicians, so far from *scanty*, that few readers would have patience to peruse it: for anterior to the year 1600, it was the invariable custom, as will be hereafter related, for the highest or soprano part to be performed in the Papal Chapel by Spaniards in *false*, that is, in a feigned voice. Near twenty of these are named from the records of the chapel by Adami; and among these, some were scientific musicians, and excellent composers.

The works of D. CHRISTOFERO MORALES, were celebrated and published throughout Europe, from 1540 to 1564. He immediately preceded Palestrina, who was not quite twelve years old, when Morales first appeared as a composer. His style, though learned for the time, is dry and insipid: yet, till supplanted by the more pleasing works of Palestrina, his compositions were in high favour at Rome, in the Papal Chapel, where he was employed as a singer, during the Pontificate of Paul the Third.

TOMASO LUDOVICO DA VITTORIA, another Spanish performer in the Pope's Chapel, and an excellent harmonist, was the first who published, in a very large size, *Motetti* for all the festivals throughout the year, in separate parts, on two pages facing each other. The notes were so large, that four, and frequently eight singers performed their parts out of the same book.

The motetti of Vittoria, which are preserved in Dr. Aldrich's collection at Christ Church, Oxford, were printed at Rome, in 1585. The author was Maestro di Capella to the church of St. Apolinare in that city, previous to his admission into the Papal Chapel; and among other works published Masses, in 1583, which he dedicated to Philip the Second, King of Spain. His burial-service, or *Messa de' Morte*, was much celebrated about this time, as were also his penitential psalms.

Our countryman, Peacham, who styles him "a very rare and excellent author, whose vein was grave and sweet, tells us, that he quitted Rome, and resided at the court of Bavaria about the year 1594."

Many more names might be added for the honour of Spain, who like these above mentioned contributed to the delight of several countries of Europe besides their own. But a sufficient number has already been specified, to acquit the Spaniards of the charge of having made a slow progress in an art, which is at all times so intimately connected with the language, poetry, and general civilization of a country, that it is usually regarded as a mark of barbarism to have neglected its cultivation.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXX.

May 20, 1813.

MUSIC OF THE NETHERLANDS, DURING THE
SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

WE have already had occasion to notice the abilities of John Tinctor, Jusquin des Pres, John Mouton, and Adrian Willaert, the first great luminaries and founders of this excellent school of counterpoint. Flemish and French musicians are so constantly confounded by the natives of France in their musical writings, that few readers are able to separate them. Yet the list published by Lodovico Guicciardini, in 1556, of eminent musicians, natives of the Netherlands, who were at that time dispersed all over Europe, robs the French of many celebrated masters, whom they have been long accustomed to regard as their countrymen. The French, in writing upon music, contrary to their custom on other occasions, forgetting the conquests of Louis le Grand in Flanders, choose to consider its inhabitants as having been *always* under the dominion of France; but the most

complete refutation of this opinion, is Guicciardini's book, and the charts annexed, all dedicated to the Emperor Charles the Fifth, at that time sovereign of the towns, which gave birth to the musicians in question.

Enough has already been said in a former letter, in regard to the claims of France to musicians, whom the Netherlands produced under the dominion of Spain, or the house of Austria, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Leaving, therefore, the right of appropriation to be settled by the French and Netherlanders themselves, we shall confine our further inquiries to the talents only of the artists, observing by the way, that as the French never scruple allowing the *Flemish School of Painting* to be different from their own, it seems equitable that the same distinction should be admitted with respect to *music*, at least during the period under consideration.

Among the most eminent musicians of the Low Countries, subsequent to those already enumerated, many of whose compositions still subsist, those who particularly claim our attention are GOMBERT, JACKET BERCHEM, CLEMENS NON PAPA, CIPRIANO DE ROBE, and ORLANDO DI LASSO. To these might be added, Claude Goudimel, and Claude le Jeune, who were neither of them born in France; but as the greatest part of their lives was spent in

that kingdom, an account of these celebrated musicians has been given in a former letter.

NICHOLAS GOMBERT, a scholar of the great Jusquin, was an excellent harmonist, and a disciple worthy of his illustrious master. He is claimed by French writers as their countryman, but both Lod. Guicciardini and Daniel Federman, rank him among the Flemish musicians. He was Maestro di Capella to the Emperor, Charles the Fifth, and furnished a very considerable portion of almost all the numerous collections of songs and motets, printed at Antwerp and Louvain, during the middle of the sixteenth century: besides a set of masses, which were published at Venice, in 1541, and two sets of motets, in 1550 and 1564, all in four parts. The collections in the British Museum, contain a great number of his French songs, in four, five, and six parts.

JACKET BERGHEM, or, as he is called by the Italians, with whom he was in high favour, GIACHETTO, (Berghem being only the name of a village near Antwerp where he was born) was the author of several motets and madrigals, published at Venice in 1539. His name, also, appears with those of the greatest composers in Europe, about the middle of the sixteenth century, in a collection of motets for three voices: *Motetti trium Vocum ab*

pluribus authoribus compositi, &c. Ven. 1543.

These compositions, which are also preserved in the British Museum, possess a clearness, simplicity, and purity of harmony and design, which have never been exceeded. In the first book of motets, by *Cipriano di Rore*, published likewise at Venice, in 1544, there is an *epithalamium* in the form of a motet, for five voices, by this author, which in the elaborate style of the times is admirable; but his principal productions to Italian words, were three books of songs, or stanzas, selected from Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, set for four voices, and published at Venice, by Gardano, twenty-eight years after the death of that great poet. *Jacket Berchem*, according to *Federman's* description of the Netherlands, was living in 1580.

JACOB CLEMENS NON PAPA, according to *Guicciardini*, died before the year 1556. He was likewise an excellent Flemish composer, and had been principal *Maestro di Capella* to the Emperor, *Charles the Fifth*. Seven books of his motets, in four parts, (*Cantionum Sacrarum*) were published after his decease, at Louvain, in 1567, and his *Missa Defunctorum*, in 1580. His style is clear, his harmony pure, and every subject of fugue or imitation simple and natural. *Dr. Burney* says, that in each of the great number of his different

works, that he had scored, there was always some excellence ; and the last, that was examined, always appeared to him the *best*.

CYPRIAN RORE, or, as the Italians call him, CIPRIANO DE RORE, one of the most voluminous, and renowned composers of the sixteenth century, was born at Mechlin, in Flanders, in 1516. In the title-page of a book published at Venice, in 1549, he is called the scholar of Adrian Willaert. In the preface to the *Canti Carnascialeschi*, published at Florence in 1559, he is called *Cantore*, as if he had been merely a *singer* in the service of the house of Medicis. He seems, however, to have spent the greatest part of his life in Italy as a composer, in which character he is mentioned with great respect by Zarlino, Vincenzo Galilei, Pietro Pontio, and almost every Italian musical writer of his time. After having been successively Maestro di Capella to the Duke of Ferrara, the republic of Venice, where he was the immediate predecessor of Zarlino; and to the Duke of Parma, he died at the court of that prince in 1565, aged forty-nine. His motets and madrigals were first published at Venice in 1544; and again, together with his masses, and many other works, after his decease, in 1562, and 1565. His *Cantiones Sacre*, or Motets, were likewise published at Louvain in 1573.

The following inscription is still legible on his tomb, in the great church at Parma :

Cypriano Rore, Flandro,
 Artis Musicæ
 Viro omnium peritissimo,
 Cujus nomen fama que
 Nec vetustate obrui
 Nec oblivione deleri poterit,
 Hercules Ferrariens. Ducis II.
 deinde Venetorum
 Postremo,
 Octavii Farnesii Parmæ et Placentiæ
 Ducis II. Chori præfecto
 Ludovicus Frater, fil. et hæredes
 Mæstissimi posuerunt.
 Obiit Anno M.D.LXV.
 ætatis XLIX.

ORLANDO DI LASSO, a native of Mons, in Hainault, born in 1520, was the contemporary of Cyprian Rore, whom he greatly resembled in genius, abilities, and reputation. Orlando not only spent many years of his life in Italy, but received his musical education there, having been carried thither surreptitiously, when a child, on account of his fine voice. The historian Thuanus, who has assigned Orlando a place among the illustrious men of his

time, tells us, that it was then a common practice for young singers to be forced away from their parents, and detained in the service of princes: and that Orlando was carried to Milan, Naples, and Sicily, by Ferdinand Gonzago. Afterwards, when he was grown up, and had probably lost his voice, he went to Rome, where he taught music during two years; at the expiration of which, he travelled through different parts of Italy and France with Julius Cæsar Brancatius; and at length returning to Flanders, resided many years at Antwerp; till being invited by the Elector of Bavaria to Munich, he settled at that court, and married. He had afterwards an invitation, accompanied with the promise of great emoluments, from Charles the Ninth, King of France, to take upon him the office of master and director of his band; an honour which he accepted, but was stopt on the road to Paris by the news of that monarch's death. After this he returned to Munich, whither he was recalled by William, the son and successor of his patron Albert, to the same situation which he had held under his father. Orlando continued at this court till his death in the year 1593, when he was upwards of seventy years of age. So great was his reputation, that it was said of him in the quaint punning humour of the times,

His ille Orlandus LASSUM qui recreat orbem.

“ He who refresh’d the WEARY world lies here.”

As he lived to a considerable age, and never seems to have checked the fertility of his genius by indolence, his compositions exceed, in number, even those of Palestrina. There is a complete catalogue of them in Draudius, amounting to upwards of fifty different works; consisting of Masses, Magnificats, Passiones, Motets, and Psalms; with Latin, Italian, German, and French Songs, printed in Italy, Germany, France, and the Netherlands.

To form a comparative idea of the style of these two composers with that of Palestrina, the specific difference seems to be this: that the two Netherlanders, by having spent the chief part of their time in the courts of princes, had acquired a lighter and more secular cast of melody than Palestrina, who, residing constantly at Rome, and composing chiefly for the church, had a natural and characteristic gravity in all his productions. In this particular, indeed, the compositions à Capella of Cyprian Rore, and Orlando Lasso are greatly inferior to those of Palestrina; for, by striving to be grave and solemn, they only became heavy and dull: and what is unaffected dignity in the Roman, is little better than the strut of a dwarf upon stilts in the Netherlanders.

They were, however, great masters of their art, and, *out of the church*, furnished future musicians with many new hints of harmony and modulation, which were of great use to subsequent composers, particularly in dramatic expression.

Cyprian and Orlando, were the first who hazarded what are now called *chromatic passages*. The madrigals, in general, of both these composers, to Italian words, are excellent in the style of the times; but their laboured and equivocal modulation, though often learned and ingenious, too frequently borders so much on caprice and affectation, as to fatigue the attention, and disgust the ear.

The pedantry of crude harmonies, and learned modulation, only suits depraved ears, callous to every thing that is easy and natural. The Italians, when they abandoned madrigals, and no longer aspired at the applause of fastidious chamber-critics, whose approbation was bestowed on no compositions that did not smell of the lamp, simplified their secular music, and instead of puzzling and goading the hearer with complicated contrivances and extraneous modulation, aimed at grace and facility in their melodies, which they clothed with such plain and tranquil harmony, as, instead of disguising and *suffocating*, greatly *added* to their energy and effect.

DRAMATIC MUSIC had not as yet an existence even in idea; and CONCERTS, or other assemblies of gay and unlearned hearers were equally unknown; so that musical composers could not be said to write for the public, who will ever prefer such pleasure and amusement as give them the least trouble. Authors of all descriptions, who seek for applause, or even bread, *must* conform to the taste of their judges and patrons; and we find, in our own times, that those musicians who are qualified by their genius and abilities to direct and govern the public opinion, find it necessary, however false and corrupt it may be, to humour and flatter it by every concession in their power. The art never remains stationary at any one point of cultivation; and if perfection could be attained, its reign would inevitably be short. In music, the learned are few, and silent; the ignorant, numerous, and noisy; in the chamber it was advisable to please the former, and in the theatre, where

——“ the fair, the gay, the young,
“ Govern the numbers of each song,”

there is no choice. A public and mixed audience is such a many-headed monster, that all its ears cannot be pleased at the same time; and whether the good or the bad predominate, the greater number must be gratified at the expence of the less.

Two of Orlando di Lasso's sons were musicians, and both in the service of Maximilian, Elector of Bavaria : the eldest as chapel master, and the other as organist to that prince. They collected their father's motets, as well those which had been published during his life, as those which remained unpublished at his decease, and printed them in a very splendid and sumptuous manner at Munich, in seven large volumes folio, 1604, with a dedication to their patron, the sovereign of Bavaria. The general reception, however, of these compositions, did not equal the expectations of the editors, other productions having taken possession of the public ear and favour. It is ever in vain to hope for the revival of OLD MUSIC : too many are interested in the success of the new ; and such are the vicissitudes of what is called taste and expression in this art, that if sufficient probity and zeal could be found in fashionable performers to incline them to attempt doing justice to the productions of former times, it would be hardly possible for them to succeed, or to render them intelligible to the hearers ; for there is as little chance for a musician of the present age to perform such productions in the manner of the times in which they were composed, as to pronounce a foreign language as perfectly as his own ; and if, contrary to all cal-

culatation, he should succeed, this music would still be an unknown tongue to the public.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

May 21st, 1813.

PROGRESS OF MUSIC IN ENGLAND, FROM THE
DEATH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH, TILL THE END
OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

James the First.

ELIZABETH, in the early part of her life, appears to have studied music, and to have been a capital performer on the virginals. Her reign was long, and, in general, tranquil: and, notwithstanding the fanatical spirit of the times, and the outcry of the puritans against every species of church music, except syllabic psalmody, our cathedral service, in consequence of the diligence and abilities of Drs. Tye, Tallis, Bird, Morley, and others, was brought to a degree of perfection, which was hardly surpassed by that of Italy itself.

This, however, does not appear to have been the effect of royal munificence : for Elizabeth, though extremely fond of splendour and shew, was so parsimonious in rewarding talents, that she suffered the gentlemen of her chapel, till the time of her death, to solicit in vain for an augmentation of salary, which the difference in the value of money and manner of living, since the first establishment of the Chapel Royal seems to have rendered necessary. And although, among the nobility, the principal professors met with solid patronage, yet Dowland and Dr. Bull quitted the kingdom in pursuit of encouragement elsewhere.

The accession of James the First to the crown of England, occasioned no immediate accession of science or refinement in the polite arts; as the country he quitted was still less polished, than that in which he arrived. Nor does it appear, that this prince, either from nature or education, was enabled to receive any pleasure from music. Early, however, in his reign, the gentlemen of his chapel, assisted by the influence and sollicitation of several powerful noblemen, who advocated their cause, obtained an increase of ten pounds to their annual stipend. An entry is made of this event, in the cheque-book of the Chapel Royal, signed, not only by five of the great officers of state, but by the

subdean, chaplains, and gentlemen of the chapel then living. Among these petitioners, there is but one name, that of Edmund Hooper, which ever appears afterwards in the lists of musicians, eminent either for composition or performance, except Bird, Bull, and Gyles, who had distinguished themselves in the preceding reign. Hooper was organist of Westminster Abbey, and author of several anthems, which are still performed in our provincial cathedrals: he was also one of the harmonists, who set parts to the edition of the psalm tunes, published in 1594. He died in 1621.

DR. NATHANIEL GYLES, a native of Worcestershire, took a bachelor's degree in 1585, and was soon after appointed organist, and master of the boys at Windsor. On the death of Hunnis, in 1597, he succeeded as master of the children of the Chapel Royal; in 1622, he was admitted to the degree of Doctor in Music, at Oxford; and on the accession of Charles the First, was appointed organist of His Majesty's Chapel. He was a learned and able musician of the old school, and composed many services and anthems for the church, which were at that time regarded as masterly productions. Gyles, however, like Ravenscroft, had a strong tincture of pedantry in his composition, which inclined him to regard with more reverence than they de-

served, the complicated measures, usually called by the Reformers *curious singing*.

It is difficult to determine which is most injurious to music, or the greatest impediment to its improvement—the pedantry, which draws us back to useless and exploded customs; or wanton and licentious *innovation*, which quits the true and fundamental principles of the art, in the pursuit of visionary schemes of reformation and singularity. Good music is ever to be found between these two extremes: and though pedantry takes hold of one hand, in order to draw her back to rusticity, or exploded learning; and *innovation* seizes the other, to seduce her from the right path, into the company of caprice and affectation; she pursues her slow and steady course towards taste, elegance, simplicity, and invention, under the guidance of judgment and science.

Anthems, masques, madrigals, songs, and catches, seem to comprise the whole of our music for the church, the stage, and the chamber, at this time. And with respect to instrumental productions, under the title of Fancies, &c. as they were chiefly composed for lutes and viols, which are now entirely laid aside, had they even been replete with genius and learning, justice could not now be done to them in the performance. Luckily, the chief

part of them are so artless and insipid, that no loss would accrue to lovers of music from their total annihilation.

The best English musicians, of the early part of the seventeenth century, have been mentioned at the conclusion of the sixteenth. Many names have come down to us, of others whose works had little merit, and have entirely perished: we shall omit the enumeration of such worthies: the history of men who have done nothing, can neither be profitable nor entertaining.

THOMAS TOMKINS, however, a scholar of Bird, who took a bachelor's degree in music, at Oxford, in 1607, was an excellent contrapuntist, and supplied the church with a great number of admirable compositions. Many of them are preserved in Dr. Tudway's collection in the British Museum, and in Christ Church and Magdalen Colleges, Oxford.

ELWAY BEVIN, also, must be remembered among the musical luminaries of this reign. He was a scholar of Tallis; and his service in D minor, printed in Boyce's Collection, has the true ancient cast of modulation, which gives a dignity to its effects, for which we can now hardly account. The accents, as is usual with the old masters, are often erroneously placed; but if that imperfection be regarded with indulgence, the composition must be allowed in

point of harmony to be admirable. Elway Bevin was in fact a man of genius, and it is to be lamented, that so few of his compositions have been preserved. In addition to his appointment in the Chapel Royal, he was organist of Bristol Cathedral, and the master of Dr. Child. Yet notwithstanding his abilities, and advanced age, he was dismissed from all his employments, in 1636, on being discovered to adhere to the Romish communion.

But the best English composer for the church, during the reign of James the First, was ORLANDO GIBBONS; who, during his short life, contributed amply to our cathedral music. Many of his productions still continue in constant use. This excellent musician, was brother of Edward Gibbons, Bachelor of Music, organist of Bristol, Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, and master of MATTHEW LOCK, and of Ellis Gibbons, author of two madrigals in the *Triumphs of Oriana*, and who is styled by Anthony Wood, "*the admirable organist of Salisbury.*"

In 1604, at the age of twenty-one, Orlando was appointed organist of the Chapel Royal. In 1622, he was honoured at Oxford with a doctor's degree in music, at the same time as his friend, Dr. Heyther; when both were countenanced and favoured with indulgences in the University, in consequence of let-

ters from the learned Camden, who recommended them with amicable zeal to its notice.

According to Ant. Wood, the academical exercise in six or more parts, performed for Heyther's degree, was composed by Orlando Gibbons, "*as one or more eminent musicians then living had told him.*"—So that grown gentlemen, as well as boys, either through idleness or ignorance, are sometimes reduced to the humiliating necessity of having recourse to the charity of friends, before they can exhibit an exercise.

A manuscript copy of the Exercise performed for Dr. Heyther's degree is said to have been found, signed with the name of Orlando Gibbons. It is an anthem for eight voices, taken from the forty-seventh psalm; and appears to be the very same composition as that to the words, "O clap your hands together, all ye people," which is printed in Boyce's Cathedral Music, vol. 2, p. 59.

"The harmony of Gibbons's service in F, printed by Dr. Boyce," (says Burney), "is pure, clear, and grateful; and the melody more accented and flowing than I have found in any choral music of equal antiquity. The *two parts in one* of the GLORIA PATRI, though they may be the cause of some confusion in the words, discover no restraint or stiffness in the melody, which continues

“ to move with the same freedom as if no CANON
 “ had existence. And, though the *Purists*, on ac-
 “ count of the confusion arising from all the parts
 “ singing different words at the same time, pro-
 “ nounce the style in which his full anthems are
 “ composed to be vicious; yet the admirers of
 “ fugue, ingenious contrivance, and rich, simple,
 “ and pleasing harmony, must regard them as ex-
 “ quisite productions, *alla Palestrina*, a style in
 “ which Tallis and Bird acquired so much renown.”

Besides his admirable choral compositions, Orlando Gibbons was the author of melodies in two parts, to the Hymns and Spiritual Songs of the Church, translated by George Withers, and of several other works, which will be mentioned elsewhere. Dr. Tudway, in the dedication of the first volume of his manuscript, “ Collection of the most celebrated Services and Anthems used in the Church of England,” addressed to Lord Harley, for whom it was made; after a just and warm eulogium on the abilities of Tallis and Bird, says, that “ none of the later composers could ever make appear so exalted a faculty in compositions for the church, except that “ most excellent artist, Orlando Gibbons, organist “ and servant to King Charles the First; whose “ whole service, with several anthems, are the most “ perfect pieces of church compositions, which have

“ appeared since the time of Tallis and Bird : the
 “ air so solemn, the fugues, and other embellish-
 “ ments, so just and naturally taken, as must warm
 “ the heart of any one, who is endued with a soul
 “ fitted for divine raptures.” To this encomium,
 every candid judge of harmony will readily subscribe;
 but when the Doctor tells us, that the celebrated
 service in F was composed by Orlando Gibbons,
 in 1635, he furnishes no very favourable proof of
 his skill in chronology : as it is recorded on the mo-
 nument erected to his memory, by his widow, that
 he died ten years before that period. For in 1625,
 being commanded officially, to attend the solemnity
 of the marriage of his royal master, Charles the First,
 with the Princess Henrietta of France, at Canter-
 bury ; for which particular occasion he had com-
 posed the music, he was seized with the small-pox,
 and dying on Whitsunday, in the same year, was
 buried in that cathedral.

The court, during the reign of James the First,
 seems to have been wholly inattentive to music. No
 royal concerts are on record, and the only secular
 use that appears to have been made of the art, with-
 in its precincts, was in the MASQUES, performed
 for the amusement of his Majesty, and the royal
 family, in which songs and symphonies were occa-
 sionally introduced.

MASQUES, which in England preceded the regular musical drama, required such splendid and expensive decorations, that, like the first operas of Italy and France, they were confined to the palaces of princes, and the mansions of the nobility; and those of Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Sir William Davenant, Milton, and others, appear to have been all originally written for private performers, and particular occasions. The incidental songs in these masques, with the overtures, and act-tunes in our plays, included the whole of our theatrical music, during the reigns of our first James and Charles.

Exhibitions, however, on a public stage, are of great antiquity in our country, and had their beginning, as Stow tells us, at *Clerks-well*, or *Clerkenwell*, a name acquired from the annual meeting of the London parish-clerks, in order to perform some history of Holy Scripture. "For example of later times, in the yeare 1369, the xiv of Richard the Second, I read, the parish clarkes of London, on the 18th of July, played interludes at Skinners Well, neere unto Clarkes Well, which play continued three dayes together, the King, Queen, and nobles being present. Also, the yeare 1409, (*in the reign of*) Henry the Fourth, they played a play at the Skinners Well, which lasted eight

"dayes, and was of matter from the creation of the world. There were to see the same, the most part of the nobles and gentiles of England."

"Skinners Well," says the same author, "was so called, for that the Skinners of London held there certaine playes yeerely, played of Holy Scripture: in place whereof the wrestlings have of later yeeres been kept, and are in part continued at Bartholemew-tide."*

According to Hall's Chronicle, the first MASQUE performed in England, was at Greenwich, in 1512, "after the manner of Italie;" and Hollingshed says, that "there was not only a masque, but a good comedy of Plautus, performed in 1520." In 1530, a masque was performed at Whitehall, "consisting of music, dancing, and a banquet, with a display of grotesque personages and fantastic dresses." This piece only wanted machinery to fulfil the idea of a complete masque, such as were afterwards written by Ben Jonson and others; which, with a constant musical declamation in *recitative*, mixed with *air*, would have formed an *opera* exactly similar to the musical drama of Italy, in the ensuing century.

* Stow's *Survey of London*, black-letter, 1598.

The following directions concerning music, appear in one of our oldest regular plays, "*the Tragedy of Gorbudac, or Ferrex and Porrex*," written by Lord Buckhurst in 1561, three years before Shakespeare was born.

"Order for dumb shew before each act.

"First, the music of violins to play,

"Second act, the music of cornets.

"Third act, the music of flutes.

"Fourth act, the music of hautboys.

"Fifth act, drums and flutes."

In 1580, masques and poems of various descriptions, written by Gascoigne, and others, were performed in a splendid manner before Queen Elizabeth, on her visit to the Earl of Leicester, of which festival, there are several minute accounts extant, particularly in Sir W. Dugdale's History of Warwickshire, 1656, from a book intitled, "*The Princely Pleasures of Kenelworth Castle*."

Riccoboni says, that James the First, on his accession to the crown, in 1603, granted a licence to a company of players, in which INTERLUDES are included: but an interlude then was another name for a play, whether tragedy, comedy, or farce. Masques are not mentioned in this patent; but as in those days, masques were entertainments, performed either at court, or in the houses of the nobility, on

particular occasions of festivity, the necessary machinery and decorations rendered such exhibitions too expensive for the ordinary public theatres. Indeed, the several parts in the masques of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, were usually represented by the first personages in the kingdom: if at court, the King, Queen, and Princes of the Blood, frequently performed in them: and this was the custom also in France, and other countries of Europe.

The French and German writers on our musical drama, confound *masque* with *mascarade* and *masquerata*: and *interlude* with the Italian *intermezzo*; but we had interludes long before the Italians had *intermezzi*; and our poems, or dramas, called masques, bear no resemblance to an Italian *mascherata*. M. de Missy, who in the Bibl. Brit. 1740, has given a regular series of our masques, particularly of the seventeenth century, is constantly mistaken in these particulars. In the manuscript *Memoirs of Music*, written by the Honourable Roger North, of Rougham, in Norfolk, brother to the Lord Keeper, it is said, that, “during the reign of James the First, the greatest encouragement was given to music and musicians, in the performance of *masques* at court, which being at once balls and operas, found employment for a great

“ number of professors, who appeared at the royal
 “ theatres in a splendid uniform, composed of silk
 “ mantles, and scarfs of various colours, with rich
 “ caps. And for the better decoration of the scene,
 “ the master appeared in the character of Apollo.”

The English seem at all times to have received more delight from dramas, in which the dialogue is spoken, and the songs are incidental, than from such as are sung throughout. Shakespeare, and Beaumont and Fletcher, have frequently introduced *Masques for music in their plays*. Of the fourteen comedies of Shakespeare, there are but two or three in which he has not introduced singing; and even in most of his tragedies, this wonderful and exquisite dramatist has manifested the same predilection for music.

In the *Tempest*, the use that is made of music is admirable. Act 1, Scene 5. Ariel, invisible, playing and singing to Ferdinand, says :

“ Where should this music be, i' th' air or earth ?

“ It sounds no more : and sure it waits upon

“ Some god of the island.”

And afterwards,

“ This is no mortal business, nor no sound

“ That the earth owns ; I hear it now above me.”

104 MUSIC IN ENGLAND, FROM ELIZABETH,

The serious part of this most fanciful, and, may we not add, *unrivalled* play, is peculiarly calculated for an opera. Shadwell, in the seventeenth century, converted it into one, in the manner of what were then called operas, on our stage; and during the last century, and indeed to the present hour, it has continued, and still continues to be performed with unabating applause, to the music of Purcell, the late Mr. T. Linley, Dr. Arne, and others.

Dr. Wilson, who reset and published two of the songs in this play, tells us in his *Court Ayres, or Ballads*, published at Oxford, 1660, that "*Full fathom five*," and "*Where the bee sucks*," were originally set by Robert Johnson, composer, contemporary with Shakespeare.

Even Caliban, in this admirable play, talks well about music :

“ the isle is full of noises,

“ Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not !”

And Ariel never appears, or is employed, without music, which is finely described, and always introduced with the strictest propriety. Prospero calls for medicinal music :

“ A solemn air, and the best comforter

“ To an unsettled fancy cure thy brains.”

In the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the ideas and language of *Fairyism* are wonderfully imagined and supported, and the use assigned to music happy and fertile.

And from an expression in the fourth act of this fanciful play, we find, that poker and tongs, marrow-bones and cleavers, salt-box, hurdy-gurdy, and such delicate instruments, were the old national favourites of our island.

The comedy of *Twelfth Night* opens with a beautiful eulogium on music :

“ If music be the food of love, play on,” &c.

In the second act, scraps of Songs and Catches, which unquestionably were well known and popular in Shakespeare's time, are roared out by Sir Andrew, Sir Toby, and the clown—“ Three merry men be we,”—“ Tilly, valley, Lady.”—“ There dwelt a man in Babylon.”—“ O ! the *twelfth Day* of December.”—“ Farewell, dear Heart, since I must needs be gone.”—“ His eyes to shew his days are almost done.”—“ Shall I bid him go ? What, and if you do.”—“ Shall I bid him go, and spare not ?” “ O, no, no, no, you dare not.”

And in the next scene, the Duke, who is as constant in his passion for music as for Olivia, says :

" Give me some music now—

" Now, good Cesario, but that piece of song,
 " That old and antique song we heard last night :
 " Methought it did revive my passion much,
 " More than light airs, and recollected terms
 " Of these most brisk and giddy-paced *times*." *

" How dost thou like this tune ?

" It gives a very echo to the seat

" Where Love is thron'd !"

And the well-known song, " When that I was a
 " little tiny boy," &c. by the clown, serves as an epilogue to this entertaining play.

In the comedy of MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, music is very judiciously introduced at the masquerade in the second act. And in Benedict's dainty description of such an all-accomplished woman, as could ever incline him to wed, he adds to her qualifications, *music* : " Of good discourse, an excellent
 " musician, and her hair, of what colour it shall
 " please God."

The famous song in the second act, " Sigh no
 " more, Ladies ; Ladies, sigh no more," &c. is introduced by several reflections upon music, and the

* *Measures*, in the musical sense.

affectation of singers. BALTAZAR, the musician, and servant of Don Pedro, was perhaps thus named from the celebrated Baltazarini, called De Beaujoyeux, an Italian performer on the violin, who, as we have already remarked, was in the highest favour at the court of Henry the Third, of France, in 1577.

In the last act, the epitaph and song are beautiful, and well calculated for music.

Innumerable other extracts might be given from the works of our immortal bard; sufficient, however, have been already cited, to establish his pretensions to a thorough knowledge of the beauties and effects of musical sound; and the curious reader may find in King Lear an absolute demonstration that Shakespeare was himself a *practical* musician.

But to return to *Masques*, which were certainly the precursors of operas in England, and belong to the chain of dramas which completed the union of music and poetry on our stage.

These productions, in many respects, resembled operas; as they were in dialogue, performed on a stage, ornamented with machinery, dances, and decorations, and enlivened by vocal and instrumental music. But the essential and characteristic criterion, *recitative*, was wanting, without which the resemblance was imperfect. Our comic operas to this

day differ so much in this particular, that in fact they are comic masques, and the national taste remains unaltered; for, in English musical dramas, the dialogue is entirely spoken, as it was in our old masques; whereas, in Italy, whence we imported the entertainment called an opera, it still consists both of recitatives and airs, and is sung from the beginning to the end.

Milton, who, we all know, was a violent republican, in his *Paradise Lost*, speaks most contemptuously of masques, although he had condescended to be the author of *COMUS*.

“Court amours,

“Mist dance, and ~~stanen~~ *mask*, or midnight ball,” &c.

Most of the numerous masques which were performed at court and elsewhere, during this and the subsequent reign, were written by BEN JONSON, and set to music either by Alphonzo Ferrabosco, Jun. or Nicholas Lanieri. Of the dramatic music of these celebrated composers of their time, it would now be difficult to produce many specimens. However, one of Ferrabosco's songs in the *Volpone* of Ben Jonson, acted in 1605, has been selected, and published by Dr. Burphey in his *History of Music*.

It is recorded in the folio edition of Ben Jonson's

works; printed in 1640, that in 1647, his whole masque, which was performed at the house of Lord Hay, for the entertainment of the French ambassador, was set to music after the Italian manner, *stile recitativo*, by NIC. LANIERE, who was not only ordered to set the music, but to paint the scenes.*

This short piece, being *wholly* in rhyme, though without variation in the measure, to distinguish airs from recitation, as it was all declaimed to musical notes, may safely be pronounced the first attempt in England, at an opera in the Italian manner, subsequent to the invention of Recitative.

In the same year, in the masque by the same au-

* Nicolo Lanieri was an Italian, who came into England early in the seventeenth century. There is a fine portrait of him at the Grange, in Hampshire, by Vandyke. It was the sight of this portrait that determined Charles the First to employ that excellent painter. Lanieri professionally practised music, painting, and engraving; but his greatest excellence was in music. His own portrait, painted by himself, is in the Music-School at Oxford. He etched a considerable number of plates for a drawing-book; was an able connoisseur in pictures, and had the art of giving modern paintings an air of antiquity, and putting off copies for originals. See Granger's Biograph. Hist. of England, vol. 1, page 590.

thor, called the *Vision of Delight*, presented at court during the Christmas holydays, there is an evident distinction of *air* from *recitative*; in both which styles, the whole piece, in verses of different measures, was performed. It is opened by DELIGHT personified, who, *stilo recitativo*, "spake in song." Then NIGHT, likewise personified, sang, "Break, "Fancy, from thy cave of Cloud," &c. This air ends in a chorus, or *quire*. After which, FANCY spake, *in stilo recitativo*. Then PEACE sang, "Why "look you so," &c. After which there is an air, which terminates in a *quire*. The song being ended, WONDER spake (in *recitative*). Then followed dancing, singing, and chorus.

Here, then, we have all the characteristics of a genuine opera, or musical drama of modern times, complete: splendid scenes and machinery, poetry, musical recitation, air, chorus, and dancing.

The music of this masque is not now to be found; but of Lanier's *Musica Narrativa* we have several examples, printed by Playford in the collections of the time; particularly in the *Ayres and Dialogues*, 1658, and in the second part of the *Musical Companion*, which appeared in 1667; in both which publications his music to the Dialogues is infinitely superior to the rest, for there is melody, measure, and meaning in it. His recitative bears a nearer re-

resemblance to that of his countrymen of the present day, than any contemporary Englishman's. These dialogues, however, were composed before the laws and phraseology of recitative were settled, even in Italy. His cantata also of *Hero and Leander*, was much celebrated during those times, and the recitative regarded as a model of true Italian musical declamation.

Vocal Music for the chamber, or for social and private purposes, distinct from that of the *church* and *theatre*, during the reign of James the First, consisted chiefly of madrigals, which had been composed in the preceding century, and of which the favour began to decline. To these, however, were added, an excellent set by Orlando Gibbons, in 1612, and eight several sets by Michael Este, with others of an inferior class by Batson, Pilkington, Litchfield, and Ward. Besides these, of the madrigal kind, but more dry, fanciless, and frivolous, *Ayres of Four and more Parts*, were published by Ford, Bartlet, Sir William Leighton, Ravenscroft, Bennet, and Attey. Of songs for a single voice, but few were printed, and these, with only a single accompaniment for the lute or viol, without symphony.

Among vocal productions for social purposes, we must not forget CANONS, ROUNDS, and CATCHES;

of which ingenious and exhilarating species of composition, the first collection ever printed, appeared during this reign, under the title of "PAMMELIA; Musick's Miscellanie; or mixed Varietie of pleasant Roundelays, and delightful Catches, of 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 parts in one.—None so ordinarie as musical, none so musical as not to all very pleasing and acceptable. London, printed by William Barley, for R. B. and H. W.; and are to be sold at the Spread Eagle, at the north doore of Pauls"—quarto, 1609.

The names of the composers of these epigrammatic effusions have not been preserved; but many of them are unquestionably of great antiquity, which is discoverable both by the words and style. Great musical science is manifested in the CANONS, and the harmony and contrivance of the rest are excellent. The words, indeed, except those of the canons, which consist of small portions of the Psalms and other parts of scripture, in Latin (which seems to imply that they were set before the Reformation), are in general devoid of wit, humour, poetry, and common sense. It has been already observed, that our lyric poetry, during the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth century, continued in a barbarous state, and infinitely inferior to the music of the times.

Canons, rounds, and catches, were never published in score, previous to the institution of the present CATCH CLUB, in 1762, and therefore one line frequently contained the whole composition; the places where the several parts were to begin being indicated by signs or numbers.

A ROUND is sometimes called a CANON IN THE UNISON, and sometimes erroneously a CANTON; but it is distinct from both: being no more than a song of as many strains, or sections, as parts, which, instead of being begun together, are performed after each other, always singing different words, and different notes in *harmony* with the rest; till a signal is given, by holding up the hand, for finishing upon the perfect chord of the key-note, where the author has placed this final mark.

A CATCH is sung in the same manner as a round, the second person beginning the first strain, when the leader begins the second: however, in the course of the performance, some latent meaning or humour is produced, by the manner in which the composer has arranged the words for singing, which does not appear in perusing them.

The reign of our first James is a very early period in the cultivation of music, merely *instrumental*. The words *concerto* and *sonata* do not appear at this time to have been invented, even in Italy; as

the *Crusca Dictionary* gives no instance of so early an use of them in music-books. *Concento* and *suono*, in the days of *Boccacio*, implied nearly the same as concerto and sonata in our own; but *concertare* and *concertante* were at first applied to the union of voices with instruments, in motets and madrigals, by doubling the voice-parts; and it was not till late in the seventeenth century, that instrumental pieces of many parts began to be called concertos, and of few, sonatas.

About the beginning of the seventeenth century, *MADRIGALS*, which were then almost the only compositions, in parts, for the chamber, seem to have been suddenly supplanted in the favour of lovers of music, by a passion for *FANTASIAS*, of three, four, five, and six parts, wholly composed for viols and other instruments, without vocal assistance. And this passion seems to have arisen, from the calling in these instruments to reinforce the voice parts, with which they played, *in unison*, in the performance of motets and madrigals, thence termed *concertati*. At length, the instrumental performers discovered, that both the poetry and singing of the time might be spared, without any great loss or injury to musical effects: as the words, if good, were rendered unintelligible by *fugue*, *imitation*, and *multiplicity* of parts; and the singing, being

frequently coarse, and out of tune, could be better supplied by their own performance. Thus vocal music not only lost her independency, but was almost totally driven out of society: as the ancient Britons, calling in the Saxons to assist them in their conflicts with the Picts, were themselves subdued by too powerful auxiliaries.

The style of these pieces would now appear very dry and *fanciless*, notwithstanding their general title of *fancies*. It would be difficult indeed, if not impossible, to select one of them, now capable of affording any other amusement, than that of discovering how ingenious and well disposed the admirers of music, during the former part of the seventeenth century, must have been, to have extracted pleasure from such contemptible productions.

Music is so much a work of art, study, exercise, and experience, that every style must be best treated, even by men of the greatest genius, in proportion to the attention and labour which they bestow on that particular species of composition. Even Orlando Gibbons, who appears to such advantage as a composer for the church, is utterly despicable in his productions for instruments, of whose powers he was ignorant.

Indeed, all instrumental music, except that for the organ, seems at this time to have been in a very rude state throughout Europe; and, with the single exception of the *fugues* of Prescobaldi, all the music, even for keyed instruments, is dry, difficult, unaccented, and insipid.

It may, perhaps, be necessary here to mention, that James the First, upon what beneficial principle it is now difficult to discover, by letters patent, incorporated the musicians of the city of London into a COMPANY; and they still continue to enjoy privileges, in consequence of their constituting a fraternity and corporation; bearing arms—azure, a swan argent within a treasure counter-flure, or: in a chief, gules, a rose between two lions, or: and for their crest, the celestial sign Lyra, called by astronomers, the Orphean lyre. However reluctantly, historical integrity compels us here to observe, that this company has ever been held in derision by real professors. The only uses that have hitherto been made of this charter, are these—the affording to aliens an easy and cheap expedient of acquiring the freedom of the city, and enabling them to pursue some more profitable and respectable trade, than that of fiddling; as well as empowering the company to exclude from processions and city feasts,

every street and country-dance player, of superior abilities to those, who have the honour of being styled, "*the waits of the corporation.*"

Towards the conclusion of this reign, a *music lecture*, or PROFESSORSHIP, was founded in the University of Oxford, by Dr. William Heyther. It is imagined, that he was stimulated to this act of beneficence, by the example and precepts of his friend CAMDEN, who having, a few years before his decease, determined to found a history lecture in the same University, despatched his friend Heyther on a mission thither, with the deed of endowment, properly executed, and addressed to the vice-chancellor, Dr. Piers.*

* The following letter from Dr. Piers, to Camden, which is printed in the Collection of Epistles to and from that illustrious antiquary, published by Dr. Thomas Smith, in 1691, will clear up a point, concerning which Anthony Wood has entertained a doubt: whether Orlando Gibbons had ever been admitted to an academical degree in music.

" Ep. CCLXIII.

" G. Piersius G. Camdeno.

" Worthy Sir,

" The university returns her humble thanks to you
" with this letter. We pray for your health and long

118 MUSIC IN ENGLAND, FROM ELIZABETH,

In consequence of this embassy, Heyther obtained his degree with little trouble and expense; and perhaps it was in gratitude for the kindness which he received from the University upon this occasion, as well as in imitation of his learned friend Camden, that he endowed the professorship, which is both theoretical and practical. At the time of this endowment, in order to promote the practice

“ life, that you may live to see the fruits of your bounty.
“ We have made Mr. Heather, a Doctor in Musick ; so
“ that now he is no more Master, but Doctor Heather.
“ The like honour, for your sake, we have conferred
“ on Mr. Orlando Gibbons, and made him a Doctor
“ too, to accompany Dr. Heather. We have paid Mr.
“ Doctor Heather’s charges of his journey, and likewise
“ given him the Oxford courtesie, a pair of gloves for
“ himself, and another for his wife. Your Honour is
“ far above these things. And so, desiring the con-
“ tinuance of your loving favour to the University, and
“ to me your servant, I take my leave.

“ Yours ever to be commanded,

“ Oxon, 18 May, 1622.

“ WM. PIERS.

“ Mr. Whear will make his oration this term, and I
“ shall write to you from time to time, what orders the
“ University will commend to your wisdom, concerning
“ your History-Lecture.”

of the art, "he gave to the music-school an harp-sicon, a chest of viols, and divers music books, "both printed and manuscript."*

It is the more likely, that Heyther was persuaded by Camden to found this professorship, as he had himself been a chorister at Magdalen College, Oxford, and may be supposed to have retained a love for music; and that Camden had a great ascendancy over him, may be inferred, from the intimate friendship that had long subsisted between them. Their several employments reciprocally obliged them to reside in the same neighbourhood; for Camden was master of Westminster School, and Heyther a gentleman of the King's Chapel. In fact, they resided under the same roof: and in 1609, when a pestilential disease, at that time raging in London, had reached the adjoining house, by which Camden was afterwards infected, he retired to the country residence of his friend Heyther, at Chiselhurst, and by the assistance of Dr. Giffard, his physician, recovered.

But of his friendly regard for Dr. Heyther, he gave ample testimony at his decease, by appointing him his executor, and bequeathing to him and his

* Biog. Brit. art. Camden, 133, in notâ.

heirs an estate, of the annual value of £400, for the term of ninety-nine years, he and they paying to the history-professor £140 per annum; at the expiration of which term, the estate was to vest in the University.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

June 5, 1813.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Charles the First.

THIS Prince, who during the life of his father had been a scholar of Coperario, on the viol da gamba, and according to Playford, had made a considerable progress on that instrument, when he ascended the throne, not only evinced a great affection for music in general, but consistently with the natural seriousness of his disposition, discovered a particular attention and partiality to compositions for the church.*

* Playford, (Preface to his Introduction) speaking of the musical skill of our princes of the House of Tudor,

At his private concerts, he is said to have condescended to honour with his notice, several of his musical servants; and to have gratified them, in a way the most flattering and agreeable to every artist of great talents, with smiles and approbation, when either their productions, or performance, afforded him pleasure. And, indeed, whatever political crimes may be laid to the charge of this Prince, he was certainly a most liberal and gracious master to his domestics, and possessed a singular power of attaching them to his person by kindness and condescension, still more than by royal bounty and munificence.

Upon his accession to the crown, Nicholas Lanieri, whom we have noticed in the last Letter,

says, "Nor was his late Majesty, Charles the First, behind any of his predecessors, in the love and promotion of this science, especially in the service of Almighty God; and with much zeal, he would hear reverently performed, and often appointed the service and anthem himself, especially that *sharp* service composed by Dr. William Child, being from his knowledge of music, a competent judge therein; and would play his part exactly well on the bass-viol, especially of those incomparable fancies of Mr. Coperario to the organ."

was appointed Master of the King's Music ; and in Rymer's *Fœdera*, there is a grant in favour of him, and the rest of his Majesty's band.*

The names, however, of such musicians as were afterwards in a more peculiar manner honoured with this Prince's notice, do not appear in the grant. From other sources of information we collect, that his Majesty was particularly delighted with the choral compositions of Dr. Child, the performance on the lute of Dr. Wilson, and the music of William and Henry Lawes, which was introduced in the masques exhibited at court.

The productions for the *church*, during this reign, though superior in excellence to those of any other species, yet if we except those of Dr. Gyles and Elway Bevin, which more properly belong to the preceding reign, are so few in number, that the augmentation they make to our former stock lies in a very small compass.

DR. WILLIAM CHILD, according to Ant. Wood, was a native of Bristol, and a pupil of Elway Bevin. In 1631, being then of Christ Church College, Oxford, he took his degree of Bachelor in Music ; and in 1636, was appointed one of the organists of St.

* Tom. xviii. p. 728

George's Chapel, at Windsor, in the room of Dr. John Munday, and soon after, one of the organists of the Chapel Royal, at Whitehall. After the Restoration, he was appointed Chanter of the King's Chapel, and one of the chamber musicians to Charles the Second. In 1663, the University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of Doctor in Music, at an act celebrated in St. Mary's Church. Dr. Child, after having been organist of St. George's Chapel, at Windsor, sixty-five years, died in that town in 1697, at ninety years of age. In the inscription on his grave-stone in that chapel, it is recorded, that he paved the body of that choir at his own expense: he likewise gave 20*l.* towards building the town-hall at Windsor, and 50*l.* to the corporation, to be disposed of in charitable uses at their discretion.

The following epitaph is also on his grave-stone in St. George's Chapel.

- " Go, happy soul, and in thy seat above,
- " Sing endless hymns of thy great Maker's love.
- " How fit in heav'nly songs to bear a part !
- " Before well practis'd in the sacred art :
- " Whilst hearing us, sometimes the choir divine,
- " Will sure descend, and in our *consort* join :
- " So much the music thou to us hast given,
- " Has made our earth to represent their heaven !"

Dr. Child's works consist of "Psalms for three voices, &c. with a continued bass, either for the organ or theorbo, composed after the Italian way. London, 1639. Catches, Rounds, and Canons, published in Hilton's *Catch that Catch Can*, 1652. Divine Anthems, and compositions to several pieces of poetry, some of which were written by Dr. Thomas Pierce of Oxford."

Some of his secular compositions, likewise, appeared in a book called *Court Ayres*, printed in 1655, which will be mentioned hereafter. But his principal productions, are his Services and full Anthems, printed in Dr. Boyce's Collection. His Service in E minor, has something more varied and interesting in the modulation, than his other works; and in his celebrated Service in D sharp, there is a glow of rich harmony, which without any great compass of genius or science is extremely pleasing; the more so, perhaps, from being composed in a key, which is more perfectly in tune on the organ than most others. His full anthems are not destitute of imagination and fire. In the ninety-seventh page of Dr. Boyce's second volume, "And upon our solemn feast day," the modulation and contrivance, are admirable to the end of the anthem.

Child's style was so remarkably easy and natural, compared with that to which choirmen had been

accustomed; that by them it was frequently treated with derision. In fact, even at the present day, his modulation appears so nearly modern, as not to produce that solemn, and seemingly new effect on our ears, which we experience from the productions of the sixteenth century.

In the preceding reign, the practice of singing madrigals was so greatly on the decline, that few, if any, collections of them were published, subsequent to the year 1620: the reason of which probably was, that the entertainments of the court principally consisted in masques and other theatrical representations.

Their chief merit consisted, not in the excellence of the music, but either in the quaintness of the device, or fable, the magnificence of the scenery, the artificial construction of the machinery, or in the splendid decorations of the theatre; and it is well known, that Ben Jonson wasted much of his time in composing little interludes of this description; and that Inigo Jones was condemned to the task of studying decorations for them, and exercising his luxuriant imagination, upon no better materials than paste-board and canvas.

The madrigal, as may be collected from what has been already said, was a species of vocal harmony very elegant in its structure, and adapted to

such poetry as 'was fit to be sung or uttered in the hearing of the most polite and well-bred persons. Songs in this form for three, four, and more voices, were the entertainment of young persons of rank and fashion. There were, however, other species of vocal harmony, in which the humour of the words was principally regarded. Short poems of this kind, suited to the gross conceptions of the vulgar, were set to music in many parts. The sentiments contained in these compositions, were in general not very favourable to good manners; for if they were not satirical, they were, in general, exhortations to riot and dissipation, or incentives to lasciviousness, drinking, and smoking tobacco, in a vein of humour adapted to an ale-house. Many ancient songs of this kind, called rounds and catches, (which terms are elsewhere explained) where the words of one part fell in with those of the other, are still extant, and continue to be justly admired for their delightful harmony. The manners of the common people of this country, at different periods, may be collected with a considerable degree of accuracy, from vulgar songs and favourite ballads. The most curious collection of this species of literature, is that published by Dr. Percy, to which we have frequently had occasion to refer.

During the early and tranquil part of this reign,

masques appear to have been the favourite amusements of the court, even in a greater degree than during that of James; and the Queen frequently performed the principal character herself. Most of these dramas were written by Ben Jonson, who in his station of Poet Laureat, furnished more masques than birth-day or new-year odes.

In 1630, he produced his masque, intitled *Love's Triumph*, which was decorated by Inigo Jones, and performed by the King and thirteen noblemen and gentlemen, at court. And in the same year, another, called *Chloridia*, which was represented by the Queen and ladies of the court.

In 1631, among several others, *Tempe restored*, a masque, written by Aurelian Townshend, and decorated by Inigo Jones, was performed by her Majesty and fourteen ladies; and in 1633, no less than five masques were performed before the King and court at different places. The following very circumstantial account of one of these, is extracted from a manuscript of Lord Commissioner Whitelock, which was lately in the possession of Dr. Morton, of the British Museum.

This Masque, entitled "*The Triumphs of Peace*," and written by James Shirley, a dramatist of the second class in the reign of Charles the First, and author of about forty plays, was acted at Whitehall,

and the whole expense defrayed by the Gentlemen of the Four Inns of Court, as a testimony of duty and loyalty on his Majesty's return from Scotland, after terminating the discontents of that kingdom. Such passages in this curious manuscript as are more particularly characteristical of the manners of the times, shall be presented to the reader in the author's own words :

" About Allhollantide this year (1633), several
 " of the principal members of the Four Inns of Court,
 " amongst whom some were servants of the king,
 " had a design that these Inns of Court should pre-
 " sent their service to the king and queen, and tes-
 " tify their affections to them by the outward and
 " splendid visible testimony of a royal masque, of all
 " the four societies joining together, to be by them
 " brought to the court, as an expression of their love
 " and duty towards their Majesties.

" This was hinted at in the court, and by them
 " intimated to the chief of those societies, that it
 " would be well taken from them ; and some held
 " it the more seasonable, because this action would
 " manifest their difference of opinion from Mr.
 " Prynne's new learning, and serve to confute his
 " *Histrio-mastix* against interludes.*

* This virulent book was published during the preced-

“ This design took well with all the Inns of Court, especially the younger sort of them; and in order to put it in execution, the benchers of each Society met, and agreed to have this solemnity performed, in the noblest and most stately manner that could be invented.

“ The better to effect this, it was resolved in each house to choose two of their members, whom they should judge fittest for such a business, to be a committee, by joint assistance, to carry on that affair.”

“ In the Middle Temple were chosen of this committee Mr. EDWARD HYDE, and Whitelocke, (the author); for the Inner Temple, Sir Edward

ing year; and in the table of contents, referring to that part of his work which treated of female players, it having been said, “ *women actors, notorious whores.*” This expression was construed into a reflexion on the Queen and her ladies, who frequently performed in court masques; and the author was sentenced, in the Star-Chamber, to be imprisoned for life, fined 5000 *l.* expelled Lincoln’s Inn, disbarred, and disqualified to practise the law, degraded of his degree in the university, to be set in the pillory, his ears cut off, and his book burnt by the hands of the common hangman; which rigorous sentence, says Whitelocke, was as rigorously executed.

190. MUSIC IN ENGLAND, FROM ELIZABETH,

“ Herbert, and Mr. Selden; for Lincoln’s Inn, Mr.
“ Attorney Noy, and Mr. Gerling; and for Gray’s
“ Inn, Sir John Fynch, and Mr. ———

“ This committee being empowered by the bench-
“ ers, made several sub-committees, one of which
“ was to take care of the poetical part of the busi-
“ ness; another, of the properties of the masques,
“ and antimasquers, and other actors; another, of
“ the dancing; and to me, in particular, was com-
“ mitted the whole care and charge of all the music
“ for this great masque.

“ I made choice of Mr. Simon Ives, an honest
“ and able musician, of excellent skill in his art, and
“ of Mr. LAWES, to compose the airs, lessons, and
“ songs, for the masque, and to be masters of all the
“ music under me.*

* The compositions of Simon Ives are not destitute of merit. Some of his Rounds and Catches, published in Hilton’s Collection, such as “Come, honest Friends and Jovial Boys,” &c. are ingenious and pleasant, and are still in use. Though the commissioner does not tell us which LAWES it was, whom he chose for Ives’s colleague, it appears in the words of the masque, published by the author, James Shirley, that it was William. The names

" I also made choice of four of the most excel-
 " lent musicians of the Queen's chapel, M. La
 " Ware, M. Du Val, M. Robert, and M. Mari,
 " with divers others of foreign nations, who were
 " most eminent in their art, not in the least neglect-
 " ing my own countrymen; whose knowledge in mu-
 " sic rendered them useful in this action, to bear
 " their parts in the music, which I resolved, if I
 " could, to have so performed as might excel any
 " that ever before this time had been in England.

" Herein I kept my purpose, causing the meetings
 " of all the musicians to be frequent at my house in
 " Salisbury Court; and there I have had together,
 " at one time, of English, French, Italian, German,
 " and other masters of music, forty lutes, besides
 " other instruments, and voices of the most excellent
 " kind in consort.

" The time for presenting this masque at White-
 " hall was agreed to be on Candlemas Night, to end
 " Christmas; and the several parts of it being

of all the masquers, with the house, or Inn of Court, to
 which they belonged, and an epigram addressed to each,
 were published in a little book written by Francis Linton,
 and called, "*The Innes of Court Anagrammatist, or
 the Masquers masqued in Anagrammas,*" Quarto, 1634.

132 MUSIC IN ENGLAND, FROM ELIZABETH,

“ brought near to a readiness for action, HYDE AND
“ WHITELOCKE were sent to the Lord Chamber-
“ lain, the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, and
“ to Sir HARRY VANE, the controller of the king’s
“ house, to advise with them, and take order about
“ the scene, and preparing things in the BANQUET-
“ TING HOUSE.

“ The dancers, masquers, anti-masquers, and mu-
“ sicians, did beforehand practise in the place where
“ they were to present the masque, and the scenes
“ were artfully painted by Inigo Jones, at the lower
“ end of the Banquetting House, and all things were
“ in readiness.

“ The grand masquers were four gentlemen of
“ each Inn of Court, most suitable for their persons,
“ dancing, and garb, for that business; and it was
“ ordered that they should be drawn in four rich
“ chariots, four masquers in each chariot, by six
“ horses in each.

“ And to prevent difference about the order of
“ their going, it was propounded by Whitelocke, and
“ assented to by the committee, that the chariots
“ should be made after the fashion of the Roman
“ triumphant chariots, and being of an oval form in
“ the seats, there would be no difference of place in
“ them.

“ For the several colours, and for the precedence

“ of the chariots, it was agreed that one of each house
 “ of the committee, should throw the dice, and as
 “ that happened, the society to be bound, of which
 “ he that threw was a member.

“ I threw the dice for the Middle Temple, and
 “ by my cast had the place for the second chariot,
 “ and silver and blue for my colours, which colours
 “ I have ever since kept in my liveries, and upon all
 “ solemn occasions.

“ Candlemas Day being come, and all things
 “ being in readiness, the masquers, horsemen, musi-
 “ cians, dancers, and all that were actors in the busi-
 “ ness, set forth from Ely House, in Holborn, every
 “ one in their order, towards Whitehall, their way
 “ being directed through Chancery-lane, and from
 “ thence through Temple Bar, and so the high way
 “ to the court.

“ The first that marched were twenty footmen in
 “ scarlet liveries with silver lace, each one having his
 “ sword by his side, a baton in one hand, and a torch
 “ lighted in the other: these were the marshal’s
 “ men, who cleared the streets, made way, and were
 “ all about the marshal, waiting his commands.

“ After them, and sometimes in the midst of them,
 “ came the marshal, Mr. Darrell, afterwards knight-
 “ ed by the king; an extraordinary, handsome, pro-

“ per gentleman, one of Lincoln’s Inn, agreed upon
 “ by the committee for this service.

“ He was mounted upon one of the king’s best
 “ horses, and richest saddles, and his own habit was
 “ exceeding rich and glorious, his horsemanship very
 “ gallant; and besides his marshal-men, he had two
 “ lacquayes, who carried torches by him, and a page
 “ in livery, that went by him, carrying his cloak.

“ After him followed one hundred gentlemen of
 “ the Inns of Court, in very rich clothes, five-and-
 “ twenty chosen out of each house, of the most pro-
 “ per and handsome young gentlemen of the socie-
 “ ties.

“ Every one of them was gallantly mounted, on
 “ the best horses, and with the best furniture, that
 “ the king’s stable, and the stables of all the nobi-
 “ lity in town could afford, and they were forward
 “ on this occasion to lend them.

“ The richness of the apparel and furniture glit-
 “ tering by the light of the multitude of torches at-
 “ tending them, with the motion and stirring of their
 “ mettled horses, and the many and various gay live-
 “ ries of their servants, but especially the personal
 “ beauty and gallantry of the handsome young gen-
 “ tlemen, made the most glorious and splendid show
 “ that ever was beheld in England.

" After the horsemen, came the antimasquers ;
 " and as the horsemen had their music, about a do-
 " zen of the best trumpets proper for them ; so the
 " first antimasque being of cripples and beggars on
 " horseback, had their music of keys and tongs, and
 " the like, snapping and yet playing in consort be-
 " fore them. These beggars were mounted on the
 " poorest, leanest jades, that could be gotten out of
 " the dust carts or elsewhere ; and the variety and
 " change from such noble music and gallant horses
 " as went before them unto their pitiful music and
 " horses, made both of them the more pleasing.

" After the beggar's antimasque, came men on
 " horseback, playing upon pipes, whistles, and in-
 " struments, sounding notes like those of birds of all
 " sorts, and in excellent consort, and were followed
 " by the antimasque of birds. This was an owl in
 " an ivy bush, with many several sorts of other birds
 " in a cluster about the owl, gazing, as it were, upon
 " her : these were little boys, put into covers of the
 " shapes of those birds, rarely fitted, and sitting on
 " small horses, with footmen going by them, having
 " all of them torches in their hands.

" After this antimasque came other musicians on
 " horseback, playing upon bag-pipes, horne-pipes,
 " and such kind of northern music. First in this
 " antimasque rode a fellow upon a little horse, with

" a great bitt in his mouth, and upon the man's
 " head was a bitt, with headstall and reins fastened,
 " and signified a projector, that none in the king-
 " dom might ride their horses, but with such bits
 " as they should buy of him. Another projector,
 " who begged a patent of monopoly to feed capons
 " with carrots, and several other projectors were in
 " like manner personated, which pleased the spec-
 " tators the more, because by it an information was
 " covertly given to the king, of the unfitness and
 " ridiculousness of these projects against the law;
 " and the attorney Noy, who had most knowledge
 " of them had a great hand in this antimasque of
 " the projectors.

" After this and several other antimasques were
 " past, there came six of the chief musicians on
 " horseback, upon foot clothes, and in the habits
 " of heathen priests, and footmen carrying of
 " torches by them. Then a sumptuous chariot,
 " drawn by six horses, with large plumes of fea-
 " thers, in which were about a dozen persons, in
 " several habits of gods and goddesses. Then other
 " large open chariots, with musicians in like habits,
 " but all with some variety and distinction. These
 " going before the grand masquers played on ex-
 " cellent loud music all the way, as they went.

" The chariot, in which sate the four grand

“ masquers of Gray’s Inn, was drawn by four horses
 “ all on breast, coursed to their heels all over with
 “ cloth of tissue, of the colour of crimson and
 “ silver, huge plumes of red and white feathers on
 “ their heads and buttockes, and the coachman’s
 “ cap and feather, his long coat, and his very whip
 “ and cushion, of the same stuffe and colour.
 “ These maskers had habits, doublets, trunke-hose,
 “ and cappes of the most rich cloth of tissue, and
 “ wrought as thick with silver spangles as they
 “ could be placed, with large white silk stockings
 “ up to their trunke-hose, and rich sprigges in their
 “ cappes, themselves proper and beautiful young
 “ gentlemen. On each side of the chariot were
 “ four footmen in liveries, of the colour of the
 “ chariot, carrying large flambois in their hands,
 “ which, with the torches, gave such a lustre to the
 “ paintings, spangles, and habits, that hardly any
 “ thing could be invented to appear more glorious.

“ After this followed the other three chariots,
 “ with the grand masquers of the Middle Temple,
 “ Inner Temple, and Lincoln’s Inn, alike richly
 “ habited and attended; and as the sixteen grand
 “ masquers were most handsome and lovely, and
 “ the equipage so full of state, and height of gal-
 “ lantry, it may be said, that it was never outdone

“ by any representation mentioned in our former
 “ glories.

“ The torches, and flaming huge flambois, borne
 “ by the side of each chariot, made it seem light-
 “ some as noon-day, but more glittering, and gave
 “ a full and clear light to all the streets and win-
 “ dows as they passed.

“ The march was slow, in regard of their great
 “ number, but more interrupted by the multitude
 “ of spectators in the streets, besides the windows,
 “ and they all seemed loth to part with so glorious a
 “ spectacle.

“ This gave opportunity to Hyde and White-
 “ locke, who usually were together, to take a coach,
 “ and by the other way to get before them to
 “ Whitehall, where they found the fayre banquet-
 “ ting house so crowded with fayre ladies, glistering
 “ with their rich cloaths, and richer jewels, and
 “ with lords and gentlemen of great quality, that
 “ there was scarce room for the king and queen to
 “ enter in. They saw that all things were in readi-
 “ ness there, and the lord chamberlain carried them
 “ up to the chamber of the beautiful and ingenious
 “ Countess of Caernarvon, his daughter, whose
 “ company was no small pleasure and refresh-
 “ ment.

“ The king and queen stood at a window, looking straight forward into the street, to see the masque come by; and being delighted with the noble bravery of it, they sent to the marshall, to desire that the whole shew might fetch a turn about the tilt-yard, that their Majesties might have a double view of them, which was done accordingly, and then they alighted at Whitehall gate, and were conducted to several rooms and places prepared for them.

“ The horsemen of the masque, and other gentlemen of the inns of court, sate in the gallery reserved for them, and those of the committee that were present were with them; only Hyde and Whitelocke were placed below among the grandees, and near the scene, that they might be ready to give assistance, if there should be occasion, and as an extraordinary favour to them at that time, and in that presence.

“ The king and queen, and all their noble train, being come in, the masque began, and was incomparably performed, in the dancing, speeches, music, and scenes: the dances, figures, proprieties—the voices, instruments, songs, airs, composes—the words and actions, were all of them exact; none failed in their parts, and the scenes were most curious and costly.

“ The queen did the honour to some of the
 “ masquers to dance with them herself, and to judge
 “ them as good dancers as ever she saw; and the
 “ great ladies were very free, and civil in dancing
 “ with all the masquers, as they were taken out by
 “ them.

“ Thus they continued their sports until it was
 “ almost morning; and then the king and queen
 “ retiring, the masquers and inns of court gentle-
 “ men were brought to a stately banquet, and after
 “ that was dispersed, every one departed to his own
 “ quarters.

“ The queen, who was so delighted with these
 “ solemnities, desired to see this show acted over
 “ again. Whereupon, an intimation being given to
 “ my lord mayor of London, he invited the king
 “ and queen and the masquers to the city, and en-
 “ tertained them with all state and magnificence at
 “ Merchant-Tailor’s Hall. Thither marched through
 “ the city the same show that went to Whitehall,
 “ and the same masque was again represented in
 “ the same state and equipage as before. This also
 “ gave great contentment to their Majesties, and no
 “ less to the citizens, especially those of the younger
 “ sort, and of the female sex; and it was to the
 “ great honour, and no less charge, of the lord
 “ mayor and freemen.

“ After these dreams past, and these pomps vanished, all men were satisfied by the committee justly and bountifully.

“ For the music, which was particularly committed to my charge, I gave to Mr. Ives and to Mr. Lawes *one hundred pounds* a piece for their rewards; for the four French gentlemen, the queen’s servants, I thought that a handsome and liberal gratifying of them would be made known to the queen, their mistress, and well taken by her. I therefore invited them one morning to a collation at St. Dunstan’s tavern, in the great room, the oracle of Apollo, where each of them had his plate laid for him covered, and the napkin by it; and when they opened their plates, they found in each of them forty pieces of gold, of their master’s coin, for the first dish, and they had cause to be much pleased with this surprisall.

“ The rest of the musicians had rewards answerable to their parts and qualities; and the whole charge of the music came to about a thousand pounds. The clothes of the horsemen, reckoned one with another, at *one hundred pounds* a suit at the least, amounted to *ten thousand pounds*. The charges of all the rest of the masque, which

“ were borne by the societies, were accounted to
 “ be above twenty thousand pounds.

“ I was so conversant with the musicians, and so
 “ willing to gain their favour, especially at this
 “ time, that I composed an air myself, with the
 “ assistance of Mr. Ives, and called it *Whitelocke's*
 “ *Coranto*: which, being cried up, was first played
 “ publicly by the Blackfriar's music, who were
 “ then esteemed the best of common musicians in
 “ London. Whenever I came to that house, as I
 “ did sometimes in those days, though not often, to
 “ see a play, the musicians would presently play
 “ *Whitelocke's Coranto*; and it was so often called
 “ for, that they would have it played twice or thrice
 “ in an afternoon. The queen hearing it, would
 “ not be persuaded that it was made by an English-
 “ man, because, she said, it was fuller of life and
 “ spirit than the English airs use to be; but she
 “ honoured the *Coranto*, and the maker of it, with
 “ her Majesty's royal commendation. It grew to
 “ that request, that all the common musicians in
 “ this town, and all over the kingdom, got the com-
 “ position of it, and played it publicly in all places,
 “ for above thirty years after.”*

* Dr. Burney has printed this once highly favoured air, in his *History of Music*. Ears accustomed to the

Among other moral reflections, addressed to his family on such vanities, as he had been describing, Lord Commissioner Whitelocke adds, "yet I am far from discommending the knowledge of this art, (music) and exercise of this recreation for a diversion; and so as you spend not too much of your time in it, that I advice you in this, as in other accomplishments, that you endeavour to get to some perfection, as I did, and it will be the more ornament and delight to you."

During the same year, besides *the faithful Shepherdess* of Fletcher, which was represented at court, preceded by a kind of prelude, or prologue, by Sir William Davenant, and set to music, the masque, called *Cælum Britannicum*, written by Thomas Carew, was performed at Whitehall, by the King, Queen, Duke of Lenox, Earls of Devonshire and Holland, and many other nobles of the court. Inigo Jones was the machinist, and Henry Lawes the musician.

excellencies of modern composers, can scarcely comprehend how such a production could possibly maintain its reputation during thirty years, especially, when we reflect, that during that period, the science of music was rapidly advancing towards its present state of perfection.

Though the masques in this reign are frequently said, in the title-page, and *dramatis personæ*, to have been performed by the King, Queen, and nobles of their court, yet it does not appear that these great personages often took part in the dialogue or songs of the piece; but generally appeared on the stage, in the splendid ballets only, as dancers, representing mythological or allegorical characters. Indeed, the Queen, at the time of the first masques after her arrival in England, can hardly be supposed sufficiently conversant with our language, to undertake any part in which declamation was necessary.

In 1634, an *entertainment*, called *Love's Welcome*, written by Ben Jonson, was represented before their Majesties, at Bolsover, the seat of the Earl of Newcastle. But this year furnishes a memorable era in the annals of poetry and music, by having given birth to the Masque of COMUS. Of the history of this elegant poem, little more is known, than that it was written for the entertainment of the noble Earl mentioned in its title-page, and that it was performed as a masque by his children and others; but the fact is, that it is founded on a real story; for the Earl of Bridgewater being president of Wales, in the year 1634, resided at Ludlow Castle in Shropshire. Lord Bracy and Mr. Egerton, his sons, and Lady Alice Egerton, his daughter,

passing through a place called the Haywood Forest, or Haywood in Herefordshire, were benighted, and the lady for some time lost. This accident being related to their father, upon their arrival at his castle, furnished a subject which Milton wrought into one of the finest poems of the kind, in any language. It was represented on Michaelmas night, 1634, at Ludlow Castle, for the entertainment of the family, and the neighbouring nobility and gentry.

This celebrated drama was originally set by Henry Lawes, who performed in it the part of *Thyrsis*: and in 1637, being likewise the editor of the poem, when it was first published, dedicated it to John, Lord Viscount Brackley, who had represented the character of the elder brother, at Ludlow Castle.

This young nobleman was but twelve years old, at the time of the performance; his brother Thomas, who played the second brother, was still younger: and Lady Alice Egerton, who acted the part of the lady, in *Comus*, could not at that time have been more than thirteen years old. These personages, and many more of the family, were buried at Gaddesden, in Hertfordshire, where their monuments are still to be seen. The family lived at Ashridge, formerly a royal palace, in that parish; and within a few years, the residence of their illustrious descendant, the late Duke of Bridgewater.

Milton, when he wrote this masque, lived at Harefield in the neighbourhood of Ashridge. The two brothers had appeared at court, in 1633, in the masque of *Cælem Britannicum*, even before they performed in *Comus*. Their sister Lady Penelope Egerton, acted at court, or rather danced with the Queen, in Ben Jonson's masque of *Chloridia*, in 1630.*

A letter from Sir Henry Wootton to the author, concerning *Comus*, is still extant; in which he says, "I should much commend the tragical (*serious*) part, if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain dorique delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto I must plainly confess to have seen yet nothing parallel in our language: '*Ipsa Mollities*'—they are *Delicacy herself*."

This letter is dated 1638, and originally appeared prefixed to *Comus*, in the edition of 1645, when the author first set his name to the poem.

Comus was previously published by Lawes, without the author's name, which Sir H. Wootton, in 1638, thanks Milton for disclosing to him by letter. The Editor in his dedication to Lord Brackley, says,

* See the Notes of Mr. T. Warton's excellent edition of "*Milton's Poems upon Several Occasions*."

that " although not openly acknowledged by the author, yet it is legitimate offspring, so lovely, and " so much to be desired, that the often copying of it " hath tired my pen, to give my several friends satisfaction, and brought me to the necessity of producing it to the public view."

Milton put a fine eulogium on the musician Lawes into his own mouth, in the character of the attendant spirit, who says,

———" but I must put off
 " These my sky robes, spun out of Iris' woof,
 " And take the weed, and likeness of a swain,
 " That to the service of this house belongs,
 " Who, with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
 " Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
 " And hush the waving woods. ;"—

Again, verse, 494, an encomium is pronounced upon him, with more delicacy and propriety, by the *elder brother*:

" Thyrsis? whose artful strains have oft delay'd.
 " The hudd'ling brook to hear his madrigal,
 " And sweeten'd ev'ry musk-rose of the dale !"

And another is also put into his own mouth, at verse 623.

“ He lov’d me well, and oft would beg me sing,
 “ Which when I did, he on the tender grass
 “ Would sit, and hearken—*c’en to extacy.*”

A very small part of this masque, in its original state, was sung. “ *Sweet Eccho,*” “ *Sabrina fair,*” “ *Back, Shepherds, back,*” and the passages beginning “ *To the Ocean now I fly,*” and “ *Now my task is smoothly done,*” are said to have been the only portions of this drama that were set to music by Henry Lawes: and this opinion is founded on a manuscript copy of the music to these strains, in the composers own hand-writing. However, besides the music for the *measure*, a dance of Comus’s attendants, between the 144th and 145th verse, and the *soft music* prescribed before verse 659, we are told in the drama, after verse 889, that “ Sabri-
 “ na rises, attended by water nymphs, and sings,

“ By the rushy-fringed bank, &c.”

And before verse 966, it is said, “ This *second* song
 “ presents them (the two brothers and the lady) to
 “ their father and mother.”

So that though no more of the music is now to be found, than those above-mentioned strains, in the composer’s own hand-writing, yet more seems to have been introduced even by Milton’s own direc-

tion. Dr. Burney has presented his readers with the song of Sweet Eccho, as a specimen of the abilities of Henry Lawes; who certainly, at least, if we judge from this woful insipid ditty, had no claim to the extravagant encomiums so profusely heaped upon him, by the friendship of his contemporary Bard. With such a subject as *Eccho*, portrayed by the genius of Milton, to work upon, it is really astonishing that any musician could have performed his part so execrably.

In 1635, was performed at the Duke of York's palace, in the Middle Temple, "*The Triumph of the Prince d'Amour*," a masque, written by Sir William Davenant, of which the vocal and instrumental music, with the symphonies, are said to have been composed by William and Henry Lawes. In 1636, "*The King and Queen's Entertainment at Richmond*," a masque. Simon Hopper is said to have conducted the dancing, and Charles Hopper to have composed the music. It was contrived expressly for the Queen, to see Prince Charles dance in it, who was then but six years old. In 1637, "*Britannia triumphans*," a masque, by Sir William Davenant and Inigo Jones, was performed at Whitehall: and in the same year, "*Microcosmus*," a drama of the same description, at the play-house, in Salisbury Court, which seems to have been the

first English masque represented on a public stage. *Luminalia, or the Festival of Light*, a masque, was also represented by the Queen and ladies of the court, with decorations by Inigo Jones. In 1638, *The Glories of Spring*, a masque, by Nabbs; and another, called *The Temple of Love*, by Sir William Davenant, and represented by the Queen and her ladies, at Whitehall, was one of the most magnificent of the times. In this drama, about one hundred-and-fifty verses were sung. In 1639, *Salmacida Spolia*, a masque, written likewise by Sir William Davenant, and set by Lewis Richard, Master of his Majesty's Music, with machines and decorations by Inigo Jones, was the last drama in which their Majesties condescended to perform in person. Other scenes, more tragical, and more difficult to support, were preparing for this unfortunate prince and his family, in which they exhibited to the wondering world, a spectacle that required no mimic pathos to render it interesting!

During the reign of James the First, the national rage for dramatic representations appears to have been excessive; as we are told, that no less than seventeen play-houses were then open in London; and in that of his successor, though their number was considerably diminished, yet six were still allowed for the amusement of the public; however, as

these were little better than booths, erected in tennis-courts, cockpits, the large rooms of inns, taverns, and ale-houses, or in the gardens and yards of such places, it does not appear that any one of them was sufficiently splendid or commodious for the reception of their majesties and the first personages of the kingdom; so that the royal passion for dramatic amusements vented itself wholly within the walls of the court, for the meridian of which the performance of masques was wholly calculated; and the king, over whose countenance and reign subsequent misfortunes cast so characteristic a gloom at this time, not only partook of all the innocent and decorous gaieties of his court, but even sometimes, in particular masques, contributed to them himself by his own performance.*

This unfortunate prince, however the prejudices of an improper education, his own judgment, or that of his counsellors, may have misled him, in the more

* The early portraits of this prince exhibit a much more serene and cheerful countenance than those that were painted during his troubles; particularly the admirable whole length at Versailles by Vandyke, which has been so exquisitely engraved by the late Sir Robert Strange.

momentous concerns of government, appears to have possessed an exquisite taste in all the fine arts; a quality which, in times less morose and fanatical, would have endeared him to the enlightened part of the nation; but at that gloomy period, his patronage of poetry, painting, architecture, and music, was ranked among the deadly sins: and his passion for the works of eminent artists considered as profane, pagan, idolatrous, and damnable.

In regard to the expenditure of his government, for the levying of which he was driven to violent and illegal expedients, if compared with what has been since peaceably and cheerfully granted to his successors, his extravagance in supporting the public splendour and amusements of his court, will be found more moderate, and unquestionably more innocent, than that of *secret service money* in our own times; and, however rigid, state reformers may execrate our first Charles, it would be ungrateful in the professors and amateurs of any of the elegant arts, to lose all reverence for the munificent patron of Ben Jonson, Vandyke, Inigo Jones, and Dr. Child.

From the year 1639 till the violent death of this monarch, neither the prince nor his subjects had leisure or inclination for the cultivation of science; or the blandishments of refined pleasure: every year was marked by some calamity, or tragical event. In

1640, avowed discontents paved the way to open rebellion. In 1641, Strafford was beheaded; Civil War commenced in the following year: and in 1643, the liturgy and cathedral service were abolished: and thus musical improvement received a mortal wound. In 1644, Archbishop Laud was beheaded; in the ensuing year, the king was compelled to quit Oxford, and take the field; and in 1646, being defeated at Naseby, he weakly surrendered his person to the Scots, who, with unexampled baseness, delivered up their countryman and monarch to his parliament, by whom he was detained in different prisons till his public execution in the beginning of 1649, on the very spot which had witnessed his former harmless recreations.*

* The English subjects of this unhappy prince were frequently shocked at the indignities offered to their monarch by his own countrymen. " In the year 1646, King Charles the First being in the hands of the Scots, a Scotch minister preached boldly before the King at Newcastle; and after his sermon, called for the fifty-second Psalm which begins:

" Why dost thou, tyrant boast thyself,
 " Thy wicked works to praise?"

154 MUSIC IN ENGLAND, FROM ELIZABETH, &c.

Our readers will, we hope, forgive us for concluding this long letter with the following quotation from our British Juvenal, which seems entirely applicable to our present purpose.

Unhappy Stuart! hardly though that name
Grates on my ear: I should have died with shame,
To see my King before his people stand,
And at their bar hold up his royal hand.
Their greater crimes make thine like specks appear,
From which the sun at noon-day is not clear.

I am, &c.

“ His Majesty thereupon stood up, and called for the
“ fifty-sixth Psalm, which begins:

“ Have mercy on me, Lord, I pray,

“ For men would me devour.”

“ The people waved the minister’s psalm, and sung that
“ which the King called for.

See Whitelocke’s Memorials, 234.

LETTER XXXIII.

June 16th, 1813.

STATE OF MUSIC IN ENGLAND, FROM THE DEATH
OF CHARLES, TO THE RESTORATION.

THE total suppression of the cathedral service in 1643, gave a grievous wound to sacred music; not only checking its cultivation, but annihilating, as much as possible, the means of restoring it, by destroying all the church books with the same intemperate zeal which had formerly actuated the early reformers, in regard to those of the Romish communion.

Nothing now but syllabic and unisonous psalmody was authorized, or even permitted in the church. Organs were taken down; organists and choirmen reduced to beggary; and the art of music, and indeed, all arts but those of killing, canting, and hypocrisy, discountenanced, if not proscribed.

This accounts in a great measure for the barbarism into which music relapsed during the reign of James and Charles the First, which were wasted in an almost perpetual struggle between privilege and prerogative, democratic and monarchical tyranny.

the crown, fearful and unwilling to grant too much, and the people, almost to a man, Puritans and Levellers, determined not to be satisfied with any reasonable or equitable concession, rendered approximation utterly impracticable.

During such contentions, what leisure or disposition could there be for the culture of a science which had no connexion with the predominant interests and passions of men? The fine arts have been truly and emphatically called the *Arts of Peace*, and the celebrated periods in which they have made the most rapid strides towards perfection, were calm and tranquil.

But no war is so fatal to elegance, refinement, and social comforts and amusements, as a *civil war*; for then it is not *national*, but *personal* hatred, which sharpens the sword, and actuates vengeance. In a foreign contest, though we wish to humble and debilitate a rival *nation*, we pity, and often esteem, suffering individuals; but when the objects of animosity are at home, and in a manner irritate the sight, we never suppose we can be safe but by their extirpation. We not only assail their persons and property but every other sublunary enjoyment.

The loyalists, in Charles's time, were attached to the hierarchy, and ancient rites of the church, which included the use of the organ, and the solemn and

artificial employment of voices ; but if they had any one custom or enjoyment which excited in the Puritans a more acrimonious hatred towards them than another, it was that of celebrating religious rites with good music, or, as those desperate fanatics called it, *curious singing*.

The cavaliers, in their turn, were in an equal degree enemies to the coarse, vociferous, and clamorous psalmody of the Puritans ; so that a reciprocal and universal intoleration prevailed throughout the kingdom during more than half a century ; for though the mutual hatred of contending parties did not burst out into open war till late in Charles's reign, yet was it secretly fermenting all the time his father sat on the throne, and peaceably *talked about* prerogative ; and indeed, antecedently, nothing but the extreme vigour and vigilance of Elizabeth's government curbed the mutinous spirit of the times, while she was at the helm.

During the great rebellion and interregnum, musicians, who had formerly been employed in the Chapel Royal, cathedrals or public exhibitions in the capital, were compelled to skulk about the country, and solicit an asylum in the houses of private patrons, whose abilities to protect them must have been very precarious.

And even, could this private patronage have been

rendered permanent, it would not have so effectually contributed to the advancement of the art as the pride and emulation excited by working for a severe and fastidious public would have done. Many a man of creative genius and gigantic talents has been manacled by idleness, vanity, or self-applause in a private station, when secure from rivals, and certain of the approbation of a small, and, perhaps, ignorant and partial circle of friends, he has degenerated into listlessness and affectation.

As there were few appeals to the public judgment in musical productions or performances during these turbulent times, the private patrons, as well as the professors themselves, were easily satisfied, as appears by the wretched and vapid compositions that were published, and the extravagant praises bestowed upon them in encomiastic verses, more contemptible if possible, than the music.

But though the musicians, selected by Charles the First for his private concerts, were not men of great abilities, yet his Majesty cannot justly be accused of either ignorance or partiality in his choice of them; for the nation at that time could boast of no better.

William and Henry Lawes were then in such general favour, that though the kingdom was divided into factions, and men not only varied more in their principles, but asserted their opinions with more vio-

lence than at any other period in our history, yet there was but one sentiment concerning the abilities of these musicians.

WILLIAM LAWES, the elder son of Thomas Lawes, a vicar choral of the cathedral church of Salisbury, and a native of that city, was placed early in life under Coperario*, for his musical education, at the expence of the Earl of Hertford. His first appointment was in the choir of Chichester, whence he was soon removed to London, where, in 1602, he was sworn a gentleman of the Chapel Royal; which place, however, he resigned in 1611, and became one of the private or chamber musicians to Charles, at that time Prince of Wales. Fuller says, "he was respected and beloved of all such persons, as cast any looks towards virtue and honour." And he appears to have justly merited this respectable character: for he manifested his gratitude and loyalty to his royal master, by taking up arms in his defence against the Parliament. And though, to exempt him from personal danger, Lord Gerrard, the king's general, made him a commissary

* This musician was an Englishman, who, having been in Italy, on his return, affectedly changed his name from Cooper to Coperario.

in the royal army; yet the activity of his spirit disdaining this intended security, and preferring a more honourable station, he lost his life, by an accidental shot, at the siege of Chester, in 1645. The king is said, by Fuller, to have been so greatly affected at his loss, that though he was already in mourning for his kinsman, Lord Bernard Stuart, killed at the same siege, his Majesty put on "particular mourning for his dear servant, William Lawes, whom he commonly called the *father of music*."

His chief compositions were *fantasias* for viols and songs, and symphonies for masques. In Dr. Aldrich's collection, at Christ Church, Oxford, there is a work of his, called Mr. William Lawes's "*Great Consort*," wherein are six setts of music; "six books."—His *Royal Consort*, for two treble viols, two viols da gamba, and a thorough bass, which was always mentioned with reverence by his admirers in the seventeenth century, was considered by Dr. Burney, as one of the most dry, awkward, and unmeaning compositions, that he ever took the trouble of scoring. It must, however, have been produced early in his life, as there are no bars, and the passages are chiefly such as were popular in Queen Elizabeth's time.

In the music school at Oxford, also, are two large manuscript volumes of his works in score, for

various instruments; one of which includes his original composition for masques, performed before the king, and at the inns of court.

The best specimen of this author's talents is an anthem for four voices, selected by Dr. Boyce, and published in his second volume of Cathedral Music.

HENRY, the brother of William Lawes, was likewise a pupil of Coperario, and a gentleman of the Chapel Royal; he was afterwards appointed one of the public and private musicians to Charles the First. The character of Henry, as a musician, was still higher, and more firmly established, than that of his brother; yet candour obliges us to confess, that on a careful examination of his works, which are still very numerous, we are at a loss to account for the splendid reputation he acquired, and the numerous panegyrics bestowed upon him by the greatest poets of his time. His temper and conversation must certainly have greatly endeared him to his acquaintance, and rendered them partial to his productions; and the praise of such writers as Milton and Waller, is durable fame. Tallis, Bird, and Gibbons, who were all infinitely superior to Lawes, never had their abilities blazoned by contemporary poets or historians of eminence.

Fenton, the editor of Waller's works, tells us, that "the best poets of his time were ambitious of

" having their verses set to music by this admirable " artist ;" and, indeed, he not only set some of the works of almost every poet of eminence in Charles the First's reign, but the fugitive productions also of young noblemen and gentlemen, who seem only to have tried their strength on the lyre for his use, and of whose talents for poetry no other evidence remains than what is to be found in Lawes's publications.

In his first book of "*Ayres and Dialogues*," for one, two, and three voices, published in 1653, four years after he lost his royal master and patron, besides a preface by himself, and encomiastic verses by Waller, Edward, and John Phillips, the nephews of Milton, and others, there are songs, some of them excellent, by Thomas Earl of Winchelsea, William Earl of Pembroke, John Earl of Bristol, Lord Broghill, Thomas Carey, son of the Earl of Monmouth, Henry Noel, son of Lord Camden, Sir Charles Lucas, and Carew Raleigh, son of Sir Walter Raleigh.

Waller has more than once bestowed his fragrant incense on this musician. Peck says, that " Milton " wrote his *Masque* at the request of Lawes ;" but whether Milton chose Lawes, or Lawes Milton, for a colleague in *Comus*, it equally proves the high rank in which he was held by the greatest poets of his time.

Bad, however, as the music of Lawes appears to us, we cannot doubt that it was sincerely admired by his contemporaries in general. By poets, we have unquestionable evidence that it was more celebrated than any other music of the same time, though the compositions of Laniere, Hilton, Simon Ives, Dr. Child, and others, now appear preferable; but the poets, whose praise is fame, probably taught others to admire: as, in latter days, an erroneous judgment of the comparative excellency of French and Italian melody has no doubt been frequently formed, and as obstinately maintained, upon the mere *ipse dixit* of Addison, who was a sound, classical critic, but certainly had no ear for music.

During the Civil Wars, Henry Lawes supported himself by teaching ladies to sing: he retained, however, his place in the Chapel Royal, and at the Restoration composed the Coronation Anthem. He did not long survive this event, for in October, 1662, he died, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

DR. JOHN WILSON, a native of Feversham in Kent, was a Gentleman of Charles the First's Chapel, and servant in ordinary to his Majesty, in the character of chamber musician. His instrument was the lute, upon which he is said to have excelled all the Englishmen of his time; and, according to Anthony Wood, his royal master was so much

pleased with his talents, and had even such a personal regard for him, that he not only listened to his performance with the greatest attention, but frequently condescended to lean on his shoulder while he was playing. The compositions for the lute which have survived him, are but feeble : nor will his vocal productions, or fantasias, suggest very exalted ideas of his abilities as a composer. That he was admired by his Majesty, and by the lovers of music at Oxford, where he was honoured with the degree of Doctor in Music, in 1644, rather proves the low state of the art at that period, than his own perfection. On the surrender of the garrison of the city of Oxford, in 1646, Dr. Wilson left the University, and was received into the family of Sir William Walter, of Sarsden, in Oxfordshire ; but in 1656, he was appointed Music Professor, and had lodging assigned him in Baliol College, where being assisted by some of the royalists, he lived very comfortably, exciting in the University, according to Anthony Wood, such a love of music, as in a great measure accounts for that flourishing state, in which it has long subsisted there, and for those numerous private music meetings, of which this writer in his own life has given so amusing an account. At the Restoration, Dr. Wilson was appointed chamber musician to Charles the Second ;

and on the death of Henry Lawes, in 1662, was again received into the Chapel Royal : when quitting the University, he resided constantly in London, till the time of his decease, at 79 years of age, in 1678.

JOHN HILTON, a Bachelor in Music, of the University of Cambridge, organist of St. Margaret's, Westminster, and also clerk of that parish, began to flourish in the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, as his name appears among the composers who contributed to the *Triumphs of Oriana*. His genius for composition, did not, however, much expand during the succeeding reign ; but early in that of Charles the First, he published *Fa las* for three voices ; and in 1652, an excellent collection of catches, rounds, and canons, for three and four voices, under the quaint title of *Catch that catch can* : among which are many by himself, that were deservedly admired by his contemporaries, and which still continue to contribute to the amusement of lovers of this species of humourous and convivial harmony. The first thirty-two rounds, &c. in this collection, are by Hilton himself, and are the best that preceded those of Purcell ; yet there are compositions in the subsequent part of the book, by Bird, Cranford, Ellis, Brewer, Webb, Jenkins,

Deering, Henry and William Lawes, Holmes, Nelham, Cobb, Dr. Wilson, Simon Ives, and two or three canons by Thomas Ford, which are excellent.

Hilton died during the Protectorate, and was buried in the cloister of Westminster Abbey.

During the tranquil part of the reign of Charles the First, musicians chiefly subsisted on the munificence of their sovereign, and the private patronage of the affluent; as in summer, no such places as Vauxhall, or other public gardens, furnished them with employment, or afforded them an opportunity of displaying their talents; and in winter, there were no public concerts, either in the capital, or in provincial towns; and, except the theatres, which employed but small bands, there seem to have been no ostensible means of subsistence for singers, out of the church, or with the exception of organists for instrumental performers, any where. Luxury was at that period less widely diffused throughout the kingdom, than in subsequent times: for, in proportion as commerce has been extended, individuals have become rich, while the state has been impoverished. Nothing renders men less parsimonious and circumspect in their expences, than a sudden and unexpected influx of ready money. Our frugal ancestors, whose income was circumscribed, had little

to spare for new modes and expensive pleasures. The great were munificent, but the rest were of necessity economical.

From the death of Charles the First, till the Restoration, though the gloomy fanaticism of the times had totally prohibited the public use of every species of music, except unisonous and syllabic psalmody, yet the art seems to have been more zealously cultivated in private during the usurpation, if we may judge by the quantity of musical publications at that time, than in the same number of years at any former period.

In 1655, Playford published the first edition of his "Introduction to the Skill of Music," compiled from Butler, Morley, and other more abstruse books, which had so rapid a sale, that in 1688, ten editions of it had been circulated through the kingdom. The book, indeed, contained no late discoveries, or new doctrines, either in the theory or practice of the art, yet the form, price, and style were so suited to every description of musical readers, that it seems to have been more generally purchased, and read, than any elementary musical tract that ever appeared in this or any other country.

JOHN PLAYFORD was born in the year 1613, and seems, by what means is not now known, to have laid in a considerable stock of musical knowledge,

previous to becoming the vender of the productions of the principal composers of his time. As he was the first, so was he likewise the most intelligent printer of music during the seventeenth century; and he and his son appear to have acquired the esteem of the most eminent masters of the art; and, without a special licence, or authorized monopoly, to have engrossed almost the whole business of furnishing the nation with musical instruments, music-books, and paper, as was the case with Walsh and his son afterwards, during the first fifty years of the last century.

All the public theatres being now shut, music was more cultivated as a domestic amusement than ever. In the virulent invectives, published at this time by the Puritans, music, its patrons and professors, were not spared. Gosson was the first writer who endeavoured to prove that theatrical exhibitions were immoral, and wholly inconsistent with the purity of the Christian religion: and in this severe censure, players and pipers, by whom he means musicians, were involved, as appears by his little book published in 1579, entitled, "The School of Abuse, containing a pleasant invective against Poets, Pipers, Plaiers, Jesters, and such like caterpillars of a Common-wealth; setting up the Flagge of Defiance to their mischievous Exercise, and over-

“ throwing their bulwarks by profane writers, natural
 “ reason, and common Experience.” These opi-
 nions were adopted, and rendered still more accept-
 able to the fanaticism of the times, by additional
 invectives and scurrility from the unbridled pen of
 William Prynne, who, in the book for which he lost
 his ears, asserts, that “ stage playes (the very pompes
 “ of the divell, which we renounce in baptisme, if
 “ we believe the fathers) are sinful, heathenish, lewde,
 “ ungodly spectacles, and most pernicious corrup-
 “ tions, condemned in all ages, as intolerable mis-
 “ chiefes to churches, to republickes, to the manners,
 “ mindes, and soules of men. And that the pro-
 “ fession of play-poets, of stage-players, together
 “ with the penning, acting, and frequenting of stage-
 “ players are unlawful, infamous, and misbecoming
 “ Christians.”

Though stage-plays are the principal objects of
 his satire, he is equally severe in his censure of mu-
 sic, vocal and instrumental; asserting, that one un-
 lawful concomitant of plays, is “ amorous, obscene,
 “ lascivious, lust-provoking songs and poems;”
 which, he says, were so odious in the time of Queen
 Elizabeth, that church-wardens were enjoined, in
 the first year of her reign, to inquire, “ whether
 “ any minstrels, or other persons, did use to sing

"or say any songs or ditties that be evile and un-
"cleane." He afterwards cites Clemens Alexan-
drinus to prove, that "cymbals and dulcimers were
"instruments of fraud: that pipes and flutes are to
"be abandoned from a sober feast; and that chro-
"matical harmonies are to be left to impudent ma-
"lapertnesse in wine, to whorish musicke, crowned
"with flowers." But this is a sufficient specimen
of the elegance of his style, and the candour of his
reasoning. Prynne, however, only spoke the lan-
guage and sentiments of the sectaries of his time;
and Stubbs, another writer of the same class, calls
those "who play to the lord of misrule, and his
"company, in country towns, bawdy pipers and
"thundering drummers, and assistants in the devil's
"daunce."*

Prynne's *Histrio-mastix*, in spite, and perhaps
on account of the rigour of his punishment, had an
evident effect in augmenting the horror, in which
theatrical representations were held by the Puritans,
and even in diminishing the passion of the royalists
for these spectacles. Yet, though the public thea-
tres were shut up, many plays were written and

* See *Anatomic of Abuses*, p. 107.

printed during the usurpation. And in May, 1656, Sir William Davenant obtained permission to open a kind of theatre at Rutland House, in Charter-House Square, for the exhibition of what he called, "An Entertainment in Declamation and Music, after the Manner of the Ancients." And Anthony Wood, imagining it to have been the first Italian opera performed in England, says, that "though Oliver Cromwell had now prohibited all other theatrical representations, he allowed of this, because being in an unknown tongue, it could not corrupt the morals of the people." An account of this singular exhibition will be given hereafter, in tracing the origin and progress of musical dramas, or operas, in England; when the validity of Anthony Wood's assertion will be examined.

In 1658, Sir William Davenant had a piece represented daily at the Cockpit, in Drury Lane, called *Sir Francis Drake*, or the Cruelties of the Spaniards in Peru, expressed by vocal and instrumental music, of which likewise further notice will be taken elsewhere. We hear of no other dramatic performance till 1659, when Rhodes, the bookseller, obtained a *licence* for acting plays, at the Cockpit, in Drury Lane, where the *opera* of Sir William Davenant, as Anthony Wood calls it, "*was translated*;" "which delighting the eye and ear ex-

"tremely well, was much frequented for many
"years."*

In 1657, were published *Lessons for the Virginals*, by Bull, Gibbons, Rogers, and others. Of Rogers, afterwards admitted to the degree of Doctor in Music, at Oxford, further notice will be taken hereafter; and of MATTHEW LOCK, who this year first appears as an author by the publication of his "*Little Consort, of three parts for viols, or violins*," consisting of pavans, ayres, corants, and sarabands. It will be necessary to speak frequently of Matthew Lock, after the Restoration; as he was the first who furnished our stage with music, in which a spark of genius is discoverable; and who was unquestionably the best secular composer our country could boast, till the time of PURCELL.

During the last year of the Usurpation, was published, "*The Division Violist, or an Introduction to the playing upon a ground*, by CHRISTOPHER SIMPSON," a musician extremely celebrated for his skill in the practice of his art, and his abilities on his particular instrument. The bass-viol, or viol da gamba, was in such general favour, during the seventeenth century, that almost all the principal

* Athen. Oxon. vol. ii. col. 412.

musicians of this country, whose names have come down to us, were performers upon it, and composed pieces on purpose to display its powers. But this instrument, like the lute, without which no concert could then subsist, was soon after so totally banished, that its form and construction were scarcely known, till the arrival of ABEL in England, whose taste, knowledge, and expression upon it, were so exquisite, that, instead of renovating its use, they seem to have kept lovers of music at an awful distance from it, in utter despair of ever approaching such excellence. The instrument itself, however, was so nasal, that this great musician, with all his science and power of hand, could not prevent his most enthusiastic admirers from lamenting, that he had not early in life, applied himself to the violoncello.

But if the general use of the viol da gamba had continued, or were ever to be restored, this book of Simpson, from the universal change of taste, and style of every species of music, would be of little use to a student on that instrument now, when rapid divisions of no other merit, than the difficulty of executing them, have been totally supplanted by vocal expression, learned modulation, and that rich harmony, to which the number of its strings is favourable. Rough but warm encomiastic verses, are

prefixed to Simpson's works, by Dr. Colman, Matthew Lock, and others, which only shew, with what perishable materials musical fame is built! Simpson, in his younger days, served in the royal army, raised for Charles the First, by Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle. He was a Roman Catholic, and patronised by Sir Robert Bolles, of Leicester-place, with whom he resided during the interregnum.

LETTER XXXIV.

June 30, 1813.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED. STATE OF MUSIC AT
OXFORD, DURING THE PROTECTORATE.

OXFORD, during the Civil War, appears to have been the only place in the kingdom, where musical sounds were allowed to be heard: that city, for a considerable time, being the royal residence, not only the household musicians, but also many performers, who had been driven from the cathedrals, flocked thither as to a place of safety and subsist-

ence. However, in 1646, when the King was compelled to quit this post, and had been totally defeated at Naseby, they were obliged to disperse, and those who were unable to find an asylum in the house of some friend, secretly attached to the royal cause, and to their art, were constrained to betake themselves to other occupations.

Ten years of gloomy silence seem to have elapsed before a string was suffered to vibrate, or a pipe to breathe aloud, in the kingdom ; for we hear of no music meetings, clubs, or concerts, till the year 1656, when, by the peculiar industry of honest Anthony Wood, whose passion for the art inclined him to regard whatever belonged to it worthy of a memorial, we have an exact and most curious account of the state of practical music in this university.

The obligations of English historians and biographers to this diligent antiquary are such, that he has justly earned an honourable mention in every literary work to which he has contributed materials.

ANTHONY WOOD, whose whole life was spent in the service of the dead, and whose labours, since his decease, have so greatly facilitated the inquiries, and gratified the curiosity of the living, was born at Oxford in 1632. In his *Life*, written by himself, he tells us, with true monastic simplicity, that in 1651 " he began to exercise his natural and insatiable ge-

“ nie to music. He exercised his hand on the violin, and having a good eare to take any tune at first hearing, he could quickly draw it out from the violin, but not with the same tuning of strings that others used. He wanted understanding, friends, and money, to pick him out a good master, otherwise he might have equalled on that instrument, and in singing, any person then in the university. He had some companions that were musical, but they wanted instruction as well as he.”

The next year, being obliged to go into the country, to get rid of an obstinate ague, by exercise and change of air, he says, that “ while he continued there he followed the plow on well-dayes, and sometimes plowed. He learned there to ring on the six bells, then newly put up ; and having had, from his most tender yeares, an extraordinary ravishing delight in music, he practised there without the help of an instructor, to play on the violin.

“ It was then that he tuned his strings in 4ths, and not in 5ths, according to the manner ; and having a good eare, and being ready to sing any tune upon hearing it once or twice, he could play it also in a short time with the said way of tuning which was never knowne before.

“ After he had spent the summer in a lonish and retired condition, he returned to Oxon ; and being

“ advised by some persons, he entertained a master
 “ of music, to teach him the usual way of playing on
 “ the violin, that is, by having every string tuned five
 “ notes lower than the other going before. The
 “ master was Charles Griffith, one of the musicians
 “ belonging to the city of Oxon, whom he then
 “ thought to be a most excellent artist. But
 “ when A. W. improved himself upon that instru-
 “ ment, he found he was not so. He gave him *Two*
 “ *Shillings and Sixpence* entrance, and so quarterly !!
 “ This person, after he had extremely wondered how
 “ he could play so many tunes as he did by 4ths,
 “ without a director or guide, tuned his violin by 5ths,
 “ and gave him instructions how to proceed, leaving
 “ then a lesson with him to practise against his next
 “ coming.”

In 1653, he found that “ heraldry, musick, and
 “ painting, did so much crowd upon him, that he
 “ could not avoid them; and could never give a rea-
 “ son why he should delight in those studies more
 “ than in others, so prevalent was nature, mixed
 “ with a generosity of mind, and a hatred of all that
 “ was servile, sneaking, or advantageous, for lucre’s
 “ sake.

“ Having, by 1654, obtained a proficiency in mu-
 “ sic, he and his companions were not without silly
 “ frolicks, not now to be maintained. What should

“ these frolicks be, but to disguise themselves in poor
 “ habits, and like country fiddlers, scrape for their
 “ livings? After strolling about to Farringdon fair
 “ and other places, and gaining money, victuals, and
 “ drink, for their trouble, in returning home they
 “ were overtaken by certain soldiers, who forced
 “ them to play in the open field, and then left them;
 “ without giving them a penny. Most of his compa-
 “ nions would afterwards glory in this, but he was
 “ ashamed, and could never endure to hear of it.”

In 1656, his record informs us, that “ he had a
 “ genuine skill in music, and frequented the weekly
 “ meetings of musicians in the house of William El-
 “ lis, organist of St. John's Coll., situated on that
 “ place whereon the theatre was built.” Here he
 gives a list of the usual company, who met and per-
 formed their parts on lutes and viols: among these,
 eight were gentlemen.

“ The music-masters were Will. Ellis, bachelor
 “ of music, and owner of the house, who always
 “ played his part on the organ or virginal; Dr. John
 “ Wilson, the public professor, the best at the lute
 “ in all England: he sometimes played on the lute,
 “ but mostly presided (directed) the consort;—Cur-
 “ teys, a lutenist, lately ejected from some choir or
 “ cathedral church; Thomas Jackson, a base-viol-
 “ ist; Ed. Low, then organist of Christ Church: he

“ played only on the organ, so when he played on
 “ that instrument, Mr. Ellis would take up the coun-
 “ ter-tenor viol, if any person were wanting to per-
 “ form that part. Gervase Littleton, alias West-
 “ cott, a violist : he was afterwards a singing-man of
 “ St. John’s Coll. William Glexney, who had be-
 “ longed to a choir before the war : he played well
 “ upon the bass-viol, and sometimes sung his part.
 “ — Proctor, a young man, and a new comer.
 “ John Packer, one of the university musicians ; but
 “ Mr. Low, a proud man, could not endure any
 “ common musician to come to the meeting, much
 “ less to play among them. Of this kind I must
 “ rank John Haselwood, an apothecary, a starched
 “ formal clyster-pipe, who usually played on the bass
 “ viol, and sometimes on the counter-tenor. He was
 “ very conceited of his skill, though he had little of
 “ it, and therefore would ever and anon be ready to
 “ take up a viol before his betters ; which being ob-
 “ served by all, they usually called him *Handlewood*.
 “ The rest were but beginners : Proctor died soon
 “ after this time. He had been bred up by Mr. John
 “ Jenkins, the mirrour, and wonder of his age for
 “ music, was excellent for the lyra-viol and division-
 “ viol, good at the treble-viol and violin, and all
 “ comprehended in a man of three or four-and-twen-
 “ ty years of age. He was much admired at the

“ meetings, and exceedingly pited by all the faculty
“ for his loss.”

At this time A. W. tells us, that “ what by music
“ and rare books that he found in the public library,
“ his life was a perfect *elysium*.

“ A. W. was now advised to entertain one Wil-
“ liam James, a dancing-master, to instruct him on
“ the violin, who by some was accounted excellent
“ on that instrument : and the rather, because it was
“ said that he had obtained his knowledge in music
“ and dancing in France. He spent in all half a
“ year with him, and gained some improvement ; yet
“ at length found him not a complete master of his
“ faculty, as Griffith and Parker were not ; and to
“ say the truth, there was no complete master in
“ Oxon for that instrument, because it had not hi-
“ therto been used in consort among gentlemen, only
“ by common musicians, who played but two parts.

“ The gentlemen in private meetings which A. W.
“ frequented, played three, four, and five parts with
“ viols, as treble-viol, tenor, counter-tenor, and base,
“ with an organ, virginal, or harpsicon joined with
“ them ; and they esteemed a violin to be an in-
“ strument only belonging to a common fidler, and
“ could not endure that it should come among them,
“ for feare of making their meetings to be vaine and
“ fiddling. But before the restoration of King

“ Charles the Second, and especially after, viols began to be out of fashion, and only violins used, as treble-violin, tenor-violin, and bass-violin; and the King, according to the French mode, would have twenty-four violins playing before him, while he was at meals, as being more airy and brisk than viols.

“ In the latter end of the year 1657, Davis Mell, the most eminent violinist of London, and clock-maker, being at Oxon, Peter Pitt, William Bull, Km. Digby, and others of All Souls, as also Ant. W. did give a very handsome entertainment in the tavern called the *Salutation*. The company did look on Mr. Mell to have a prodigious hand on the violin, and they thought that no person, as all in London did, could go beyond him.”

By connecting the scattered fragments of this zealous dilettante's life, which concern music, we shall be able to form an idea of the state of the art, not only in Oxford, but in every other part of the kingdom, during the last years of the usurpation.

In the year 1658 Wood tells us, that, “ THOMAS BALTZAR, a Lubecker born, and the most famous artist for the violin that the world had yet produced, was now in Oxon, and this day, July 24th, A. W. was with him, and Mr. Ed. Low, lately organist of Ch. Ch. at the house of Will. Ellis.

“ A. W. did then and there, to his very great astonishment, hear him play on the violin. He then saw him run up his fingers to the end of the finger-board of the violin, and run them back insensibly, and all with alacrity, and in very good tune, which he, nor any in England, saw the like before. A. W. entertained him and Mr. Low with what the house could then afford; and afterwards he invited them to the tavern; but they being engaged to go to other company, he could no more hear him play, or see him play at that time. Afterwards he came to one of the weekly meetings at Mr. Ellis’s house, and he played to the wonder of all the auditory; and exercising his finger and instrument several ways, to the utmost of his power. Wilson, thereupon, the public professor, the greatest judge of music that ever was, did, after his humoursome way, stoop down to Baltzar’s feet, to see whether he had a hoof on, that is to say, whether he was a devil, or not, because he acted beyond the parts of man.

“ About this time it was that Dr. John Wilkins,* warden of Wadham, the greatest curioso of his

* Afterwards Bishop of Chester, and called *the Flying Bishop*.

“ time, invited him and some of the musicians to his
“ lodgings in that college, purposely to have a con-
“ sort, and to see and hear him play. The instru-
“ ments and books were carried thither, but none
“ could be persuaded there to play against him in
“ consort on the violin. At length the company
“ perceiving A. W. standing behind in a corner near
“ the door, they *haled* him in among them, and play,
“ forsooth, he must, against him. Whereupon he
“ being not able to avoid it, he took up a violin, as
“ poor Troylus did against Achilles. He, abashed
“ at it, yet honour he got by playing with, and
“ against such a grand master as Baltzar was. Mr.
“ Davis Mell was accounted hitherto the best for
“ the violin in England; but after Baltzar came into
“ England, and shewed his most wonderful parts on
“ that instrument, Mell was not so admired; yet he
“ played *sweeter*, was a well-bred gentleman, and
“ not given to excessive drinking, as Baltzar was.*

* At the Restoration, Baltzar was placed at the head of his Majesty's new band of violins. His compositions have more force and variety in them, and consequently required more hand to execute than any music then known for his instrument.

Anthony Wood tells us, that this celebrated violinist

“ All the time that A. W. could spare from his
“ beloved studies of English history, antiquities, he-
“ raldry, and genealogies, he spent in the most de-
“ lightful facultie of music, either instrumental or
“ vocal; and if he had missed the weekly meetings
“ in the house of Will. Ellis, he could not well en-
“ joy himself all the week after. Of all, or most of
“ the company, the names are set down under the
“ year 1656. As for those that came in after, and
“ were new performers, and with whom A. W. fre-
“ quently played, were these: Charles Perot, M. A.
“ fellow of Oriel College, a well-bred gentleman,
“ and a person of a sweet nature. Christ. Harrison,
“ M. A. fellow of Queen's College, a magget-head-
“ ed person, and humourous. Kenelm Digby, a
“ fellow of All Soul's Coll.: he was afterwards Dr.
“ of Laws: he was a violinist, and the two former

died in July 1663, and was buried in the cloister belong-
ing to St. Peter's Church at Westminster; and adds “ that
“ this person being beloved by all lovers of music, his
“ company was therefore desired; and company, espe-
“ cially musical company, delighting in drinking, made
“ him drink more than ordinary, which brought him to
“ his grave.”

“ violists. Will. Bull, M. A. for the viol and
“ violin; John Vincent, M. A. a violist; Syl-
“ vanus Taylor, Fellow of All Souls Coll. vio-
“ list and songster, his elder brother Capt. Silas
“ Taylor was a composer of music, played and
“ sung his parts; Henry Langley, M. A. violist
“ and songster; Samuel Woodford, M. A. a vio-
“ list; Franc. Parry, M. A. a violist and songster;
“ Christ. Coward, and Henry Bridgman, both Mas-
“ ters of Arts; Nathan Crew, M. A. a violinist and
“ violist, but always played out of tune, as having
“ no good ear: he was afterwards Bishop of Dur-
“ ham: Matthew Hutton, M. A. an excellent viol-
“ ist; Thom. Ken, of New College, afterwards
“ Bishop of Bath and Wells: he would be some-
“ times among them, and sing his part; Christ. Jef-
“ feries, a junior student of Christ Church, excel-
“ lent at the organ and virginals, or harpaicon, hav-
“ ing been trained up to these instruments by his fa-
“ ther, George Jefferies, organist to King Charles
“ the First at Oxon, Richard Rhodes, another ju-
“ nior student of Ch. Ch. a confident Westmonas-
“ rian, a violinist to hold between his legs.

“ These did frequent the weekly meetings, and by
“ the help of public masters of music, who were
“ mixed with them, they were much improved.

“ Narcissus Marsh would come sometimes amongst
“ them, but seldom played, because he had a weekly
“ meeting in his chamber, where masters of music
“ would come, and some of the company above
“ mentioned. When he became Principal of St.
“ Alban’s Hall, he translated the meeting thither;
“ and there it continued, when that meeting at Mr.
“ Ellis’s house was given over. And so it continued,
“ till he went over to Ireland, where he became af-
“ terwards Archbishop of Tuam.

“ After his Majesty’s restoration, when the mas-
“ ters of music were restored to their several places,
“ that they before had lost, or gotten other prefer-
“ ment, the weekly meetings at Mr. Ellis’s house
“ began to decay, because they were only held up
“ by scholars, who wanted directors, and instruc-
“ tors. So that these meetings were not continued
“ above two or three years, and I think they did not
“ go beyond 1662.” Our Oxford annalist termi-
nates his account of the musical transactions of that
university, during the interregnum, by the following
anecdote.

“ In October, 1659, James Quin, M. A. and one
“ of the senior students of Christ Church, a Middle-
“ sex man born, but son of Walter Quin, of Dub-
“ lin, died in a crazed condition. A. W. had some
“ acquaintance with him, and hath several times

“ heard him sing with great admiration. His voice
“ was a bass, and he had great command of it.
“ ’Twas very strong, and exceeding *trouling*, but he
“ wanted skill, and could scarce sing in consort. He
“ had been turned out of his student’s place by the
“ visitors: but being well acquainted with some
“ great men of those times, that loved music, they
“ introduced him into the company of Oliver Crom-
“ well the Protector, who loved a good voice, and in-
“ strumental music well. He heard him sing with very
“ great delight, liquored him with sack, and in con-
“ clusion said, *Mr. Quin, you have done very well,*
“ *what shall I do for you?*—To which Quin made
“ answer, with great compliments, of which he had
“ command, with a great grace, that, *your Highness*
“ *would be pleased to restore him to his student’s*
“ *place:* which he did accordingly, and so kept it
“ to his dying day.”

Should this minute, and indiscriminate antiquary
be sometimes thought to want taste, and selection
sufficient to give due weight to his records, it must
be ascribed to his constant habit of journalizing,
collecting anecdotes, and making memorandums of
every person and transaction that came to his know-
ledge, in the uncouth, and antiquated language of
his early youth. For this dialect being inelegant
and vulgar, even when he learned it, renders his

writings frequently ridiculous, though they contain such information, as can be no where else obtained. But the few opportunities he had of remarking the gradual alterations in our colloquial language; by conversing with men of the world, degrade him to a level with writers infinitely his inferiors both in information and entertainment.

An excellent apology has been made for his imperfections, by the editor of his *Life*, written by himself, and published in 1772; which is so interesting, that he must be an incurious enquirer indeed, who, having dipped into it, is not sufficiently fascinated by the truly original simplicity of the style, and the real importance of many of the anecdotes, to give it an entire perusal before he lays it down. Anthony Wood was credulous, and perhaps too much an enthusiast in music to speak of its effects with critical and philosophical precision; however, without his assistance it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to trace the state of the art at Oxford, and the academical honours bestowed on its professors, as well as the memorials of their lives and works.

Upon his decisions in matters of taste, we are not implicitly to rely. His extravagant encomiums on Dr. Wilson's musical talents, may have proceeded from want of experience, knowledge, and penetration into the finer features of the art; and in regard

to Dr. Rogers, his judgment seems to have been evidently warped by friendship. Yet upon the whole it must be admitted, that it is only from such minute records as those of Anthony Wood, that any true and satisfactory insight can be acquired into the characters, manners, and domestic habits, and occurrences of our ancestors. The great features of history, and the events which occasion the ruin or prosperity of a state, must be nearly the same in every age and country; but the comforts, conveniences, and amusements, and even the distresses and embarrassments of private life, furnish the mind with reflections far more varied and interesting to the generality of mankind, than the rise of empires, or the downfall of kings and heroes.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXV.

July 4, 1813.

STATE OF MUSIC IN ENGLAND, DURING THE
REIGN OF CHARLES THE SECOND.

THE nation, tired of the gloomy and tyrannical government of Cromwell, manifested how much they

languished for the restoration of royalty, by the degree of enthusiasm and intoxication, with which they received the son of their murdered sovereign. After the fatal disputes concerning regal prerogative, and the noble struggle made at the beginning of the troubles by men of principle, from motives truly honest and patriotic, this appears to have been a most favourable moment, for amicably settling the boundaries of power, and the extent of civil liberty, which nothing but a similar concession, and a total dissolution of ancient compacts, could afterwards produce. Charles, at a distance from the throne, would cheerfully have submitted to terms, which, when he had ascended it, he opposed with all that excessive power, with which he was but too hastily invested.

The restoration of monarchy and religious establishments, drew from their retreats all the surviving musicians, who had been involved in the calamities occasioned by the Civil War, and the consequent subversion of the national government, and established church. Of the gentlemen of Charles the First's chapel, three only appear to have claimed their former station; Dr. Wilson, Christopher Gibbons, and Henry Lawes.

When the liturgy, on the 4th of January, 1644, had been declared by the House of Lords, a super-

stitions ritual, the directory, published by the assembly of divines at Westminster, to whom the Parliament referred all matters concerning religion, established a new form of divine worship, in which no music, except psalm-singing was allowed. It was likewise the opinion of those who were at that time in power, that ORGANS should no longer be permitted to remain in churches; that choral books should be torn and destroyed; painted glass windows broken; the cathedral service totally abolished; and that those retainers of the church, whose function had been to assist at such prophane vanities, should betake themselves to some employment less offensive to the Lord. In consequence of these tenets, collegiate and parochial churches had been stripped of their organs, and other ornaments, monuments defaced, sepulchral inscriptions engraven on brass torn up, libraries ransacked for musical service-books of every kind, which being all deemed alike superstitious and ungodly, were committed to the flames, or otherwise destroyed, and the utmost efforts used to procure their total extirpation. Their endeavours proved so effectual, that, at the Restoration, when the heads of the church set about re-establishing the cathedral service, it was equally difficult to find either instruments, professors, books, or singers, capable of performing the requisite duty. For or-

gan-builders, organ-players, and choir-men, having been constrained to seek new means of subsistence, the former degenerated into common carpenters and joiners; and the latter, privately taught the lute and virginal, or such wretched, doleful psalmody, as was publicly allowed.

Child, Christopher Gibbons, Rogers, and Wilson, were created Doctors, and together with Low, of Oxford, though advanced in years, were promoted. Child, Gibbons, and Low, were appointed organists of the Chapel Royal, and Captain Henry Cook, master of the children.*

Gibbons was likewise organist of Westminster Abbey: Rogers, who had formerly been organist of Magdalen College, Oxford, was preferred to Eton. Wilson had a place both in the chapel and Westminster Abbey; and Albertus Bryne, a scholar of John Tomkins, was appointed organist of St. Paul's where he had been brought up.

In this manner, the several choirs throughout the kingdom, were gradually supplied with able masters.

* Cook had been brought up in the King's Chapel, but quitted it at the beginning of the rebellion; and having, in 1642, obtained a captain's commission in the royal army, he retained the name of *Captain* ever after.

At first, however, for want of boys, capable of performing the duty, the treble parts were either played upon cornets or sung by men in a feigned voice.

The services and anthems to which they had recourse, were those printed in Barnard's Collection, with such others as could be recovered in manuscript, till new compositions were added by the lately re-instated masters.

The difficulty of procuring organs upon short notice, seems to have been still greater than that of finding music or vocal performers. Scarcely could a tolerable organ-builder be met with in the whole kingdom.

But, after the suppression of Cathedral service, and prohibition of the liturgy, some of the ecclesiastical instruments had been sold to private persons, and others, but partially destroyed: these being produced, were hastily repaired, and erected for present use. Dallans, the best workman that could then be found, was employed to build a new organ for St. George's Chapel, at Windsor; which, perhaps, from the haste with which it was constructed, though its external appearance was beautiful and magnificent, did not prove so excellent as was expected.*

* This organ was presented by his present Majesty to the parish church of Windsor, where it still remains.

Under these circumstances, it was thought expedient to invite foreign builders of known abilities to settle among us : and the premiums offered on this occasion, brought over the two celebrated workmen, SMITH and HARRIS.

BERNARD SCHMIDT, as the Germans write the name, brought over with him from Germany, of which country he was a native, two nephews, Gerard and Bernard, his assistants ; and to distinguish him from these, as well as to express the reverence due to his abilities, which placed him at the head of his profession, he was called FATHER SMITH. The first organ he undertook to build for this country, was for the royal chapel at Whitehall, which, being hastily put together, did not quite fulfil the expectations of those who were qualified to estimate its excellence. It was probably from some such early failure, that this admirable workman determined never to engage to build an organ upon short notice, nor for such a price as would compel him to deliver it in a state of less perfection than he wished.

SNETZLER, and other immediate descendants of those who conversed with Father Smith, and had

A fine organ by Green, is erected in its place in St. George's Chapel.

seen him work, relate, that he was so particularly careful in the choice of his wood, as never to use any that had the least knot or flaw in it; and so tender of his reputation, as never to waste his time in trying to mend a bad pipe, either of wood or metal: so that when he came to *voice* a pipe, if it had any defect, he instantly threw it away, and made another. This, in a great measure, accounts for the equality and sweetness of his stops, as well as the soundness of his pipes, to this day.

Smith had not been many months in England, when HARRIS arrived from France with his son René, an ingenious and active young man, to whom he had confided all the secrets of his art. At first they met with little encouragement, as Dallans and Smith engrossed the whole business; but upon the decease of Dallans, who died while he was building an organ for the old church at Greenwich, in 1672, and of the elder Harris, who did not long survive him, the younger, René, became a formidable rival to Smith.

The contention between these eminent artists, at the time of erecting the admirable organ, which still speaks for itself, in the Temple church, was carried on with such spirit, not to say violence, as, perhaps, never happened before or since on a similar occasion.

196 STATE OF MUSIC IN ENGLAND, DURING

About the latter end of King Charles the Second's reign, the master of the Temple, and the benchers, determined to have an organ as complete as possible, erected in their church. They received proposals from both these eminent artists, backed by the recommendation of such an equal number of powerful friends, and celebrated organists, that they were unable to determine among themselves which to employ.

They therefore informed the candidates, that if each of them would erect an organ in different parts of the church, they would retain that which in the greatest number of excellencies, should be allowed to deserve the preference. Smith and Harris agreeing to this proposal, in about nine months each had, with the utmost exertion of his abilities, an instrument ready for trial. Dr. Tudway, their contemporary, and the intimate acquaintance of both, says, that Dr. Blow and Purcell, then in their prime, performed on Father Smith's organ, on appointed days, and displayed its excellencies; and till the other was heard, every one believed that this must be chosen.

Harris employed Mons. Lully, organist to Queen Catherine, a very eminent master, to touch his organ, which brought it into favour: and thus they continued vying with each other for near a twelve-month. At length, Harris challenged Father Smith

to make certain additional reed stops, within a given time. These stops, which were new to English ears, gave great delight to the crowds, who attended the trials; and the imitations were so exact and pleasing on both sides, that it was difficult to determine who had best succeeded. At length, the decision was left to Lord Chief Justice Jefferies, who was of that society; and he terminated the controversy in favour of Father Smith: so that Harris's organ was taken away without loss of reputation, having so long pleased and puzzled better judges than Jefferies.

Part of Harris's organ, after its rejection at the Temple, was erected at St. Andrew's, Holborn; and part, in the cathedral of Christ Church, Dublin.

The Honourable Roger North, who was in London at the time of the contention in the Temple Church, says, in his *Memoirs of Music*, that the competition between Father Smith and Harris, was carried on with such violence by the friends of each party, that they "*were just not ruined.*" Old Roseingrave assured Dr. Burney, that the partisans for each candidate, in the fury of their zeal, proceeded to the most mischievous and unwarrantable acts of hostility; and, that in the night preceding the last trial of the reed stops, the friends of Harris cut the bellows of Smith's organ in such a manner, that when

196 STATE OF MUSIC IN ENGLAND, DURING

the time came for playing upon it, no wind could be conveyed into the wind-chest.

As the benchers of the Inner and Middle Temple defray the whole expense of the organ in their church, and consequently appoint the maker, tuner, and players upon it, in order to have this part of divine service as perfect as possible, they have the instrument tuned every Saturday, for which a salary of 20*l.* a year is allowed; and each of the societies elects an organist, at a salary of 50*l.* In addition to the sweetness of the several stops, and power of the chorus, in order to render the tuning more perfect, two of the five short keys are divided in the middle, and communicate with two different sets of pipes: so that G sharp, and A flat, are not synonymous sounds.*

During the latter end of the seventeenth century, organs were erected in the principal parish churches of the city of London. Of these, Harris built a greater number than Smith, some of which are considered very excellent, such as the organ at St. Mary

* By this contrivance, the otherwise unavoidable imperfection of keyed instruments is got rid of; and that discordant harshness, technically called "*the wolf*," is removed,

Axe, St. Bride's, St. Lawrence near Guildhall, and many others.*

The number, however, of organs built and enriched with new stops by Father Smith, is prodigious, and their reputation equal to that of the pictures or single figures of Raphael. A single stop, known to be of his workmanship, is still invaluable. The touch, and general mechanism of modern instruments are certainly superior to those of Smith; but for sweetness of tone, his pipes are still unrivalled. At Oxford, he built the organs at Christ Church and St. Mary's; at Cambridge, that of Trinity College; and in London, those of St. Margaret, Westminster, St. Mary at Hill, St. Clement Danes, and others, all excellent.†

In consequence of the reputation which Father Smith had acquired by his admirable execution of

* That part of the organ built by Harris for the Temple Church, and sent to Dublin, was afterwards sold to the inhabitants of Wolverhampton for 500 l. It still stands in the church of that town, and is thought a very good instrument.

† Father Smith's organ, which formerly stood in St. Margaret's, was removed some years since. The present organ in that church was built by Avery.

every order which he had received, since the organ at Whitehall, he was employed to build an instrument for the cathedral of St. Paul, which is universally acknowledged to have the sweetest tone (except that in the Temple), the most noble chorus, and a swell which produces the finest effects of any in the kingdom. In short, it is an instrument in every respect worthy of that beautiful and stupendous structure.

It is said, that notwithstanding the power of the chorus of this admirable organ, several more excellent stops were made for it, which lay many years useless in the Vestry; as Sir Christopher Wren, tender of his architectural proportions, would never consent to suffer the case to be sufficiently capacious to receive them. No doubt he had reason and science on his side. It is, however, still to be lamented, that it ever was placed in its present situation: had it been erected on one side of the choir, the whole extent of the structure, from east to west, might, like St. Peter's at Rome, its prototype, have been seen at a single glance.

This was anciently the usual place allotted to the organ in our cathedrals. At Canterbury and Winchester its situation is still on the north side of the choir. At Chester also, the small primitive organ

of that cathedral is still standing on the left side of the choir, though that which is now used is at the west end.

It appears by No. 552 of the *Spectator*, December 3d, 1712, that Harris was a candidate for building the organ at St. Paul's, as well as that in the Temple. He is strongly recommended to the public by Sir Richard Steele in that paper, to which the reader is referred.

Steele's necessitous circumstances are well known: hence we may presume that Harris acquired his patronage by lending or building an instrument for his concert room in York Buildings. Had he not been unduly influenced, he would certainly have inserted the name of Bernard Smith in his paper, instead of Renatus Harris.

The organ-builders who succeeded Father Smith and Harris, were Schreider, who built the organ in St. Martin's in the Fields, which George the First presented to that church soon after his arrival in England; Schwarbrook, another German, who built and repaired several organs; Byfield, Bridge, and Jordan, who, after severally distinguishing themselves, entered into partnership, and had nearly the whole business of the kingdom to themselves: till Snetzler, by the instrument he made for Lynn Regis, in which he first introduced that sweet stop call-

ed the *dulciana*, and which he and his successors have since so happily applied as a solo stop in chamber-organs, gave such a specimen of his superior abilities, that he was soon sent for to every quarter of the kingdom. Our countryman Green, an ingenious mechanic, since his time, possessed the public favour; at present, England and Elliot are deservedly in high repute. The REED-WORK, in particular, of the last of these eminent artists, needs only to be heard to be approved; and in the very material circumstance of *continuing in tune*, is, in the opinion of the author of this work, who speaks from his own experience, absolutely unrivalled.

To return from this short history of organ-building, to the period now more particularly under review. The establishment of Charles the Second's Chapel, at the time of his coronation, appears by the entry in the cheque-book, April. 23d, 1661, being St. George's Day, to have included, among many others, the following names, not yet entirely forgotten, the works of some of whom are still in high esteem.

Edward Low, William Child, Christopher Gibbons, Organists.

Captain Henry Cook, Master of the Children.

Henry Lawes, Clerk of the Cheque.

Thomas Purcell and HENRY PURCELL, Gentlemen of the Chapel.

The salaries of the gentlemen of the chapel had been augmented both by James the First and Charles the First; and in the year 1668, Charles the Second, by the privy-seal, farther augmented them to seventy pounds a-year, and granted to Captain Cook and his successors in office thirty pounds a-year, for the diet, lodging, washing, and teaching, each of the children of the Chapel Royal.

The small stock of choral music, with which the chapel began, becoming in a few years less delightful by frequent repetition, the King, discovering a genius for composition in some of the young people of the chapel, encouraged them to cultivate and exercise it; and many of the first set of choristers, even while they were children of the Chapel, composed anthems and services, which are still used in our cathedrals. These, by the King's special command, were accompanied by violins, cornets, and sackbuts, to which instruments introductory symphonies were given, and the performers placed in the organ-loft.

Dr. Tudway, in the dedication to the second volume of his Manuscript Collection of English Church-Music to Lord Harley, assigns the following reasons for the change of style in the music of the Chapel Royal, by a mixture of what he calls *theatrical* and *secular*.

“ The standard of church musick begun by Mr

“ Tallis, Mr. Bird, and others, was continued for
 “ some years after the Restoration, and all compo-
 “ sers conformed themselves to the pattern which
 “ was set them.

“ His Majesty, who was a brisk and airy prince,
 “ coming to the crown in the flower and vigour of
 “ his age, was soon, if I may so say, tired with the
 “ grave and solemn way which had been established
 “ by Tallis, Bird, and others, ordered the compo-
 “ sers of his chapel to add symphonies, &c. with in-
 “ struments to their anthems; and thereupon esta-
 “ blished a select number of his private music to
 “ play the symphony and ritornellos, which he had
 “ appointed. The old masters of music, Dr. Child,
 “ Dr. Gibbons, Mr. Lowe, &c. organists to his
 “ Majesty, hardly knew how to comport themselves
 “ with these new-fangled ways, but proceeded in
 “ their compositions according to the old style, and
 “ therefore there are only some full anthems and
 “ services of theirs to be found.”

“ In about three or four years time, some of the
 “ forwardest and brightest children of the chapel, as
 “ Pelham Humphrey, John Blow, &c. began to be
 “ masters of a faculty in composing; this his Ma-
 “ jesty greatly encouraged, by indulging their youth-
 “ ful fancies, so that every month, at least, they
 “ produced something new of this kind. In a few

“ years more, several others, educated in the chapel, produced their compositions in this style, for otherwise it was in vain to hope to please his Majesty.”

CAPTAIN HENRY COOK, appointed master of the children at the Restoration, according to the credulous Ant. Wood's MS. Memoirs in the Ashmolean Library, “ was esteemed the best musician of his time to sing to the lute, till Pelham Humphrey, his scholar, came up, after which *he died of grief!!!*”

We are told, in the continuation of Sir Richard Baker's Chronicle, that Matthew Lock set the music for Charles the Second's Public Entry, and Captain Henry Cook for his Coronation. A hymn of his composition, in four parts, is likewise said to have been performed instead of the Litany, in the chapel of St. George, at Windsor, by order of the sovereign, and knights companions of the garter, on the 17th of April, 1660. None of his church music was printed; and, indeed, if we may judge of that by his few secular compositions, dispersed in the collections of the times, he was by no means qualified for the office to which he was appointed at the Restoration. However, he had the merit, or, at least, the good fortune, to be the master of three boys, among the children of the chapel, who gave very early testimonies of their genius and progress

in composition. These were Pelham Humphrey, John Blow, and Michael Wise, who, even while they were choristers in the chapel, produced verse anthems far superior in melody and design, to any that our church could boast anterior to Henry Purcell.

PELHAM HUMPHREY, after continuing in the chapel royal, as a singing boy, from the Restoration, till he lost his treble voice, was admitted a gentleman of his Majesty's chapel, on the 3d of January, 1666; and on the death of Cook, in 1672, was appointed master of the children. He did not however long fill this honourable station, as he died very much regretted, in 1674, at the early age of twenty-seven.

His choral compositions are numerous for so short a life, as, in addition to his seven full and verse anthems, printed by Dr. Boyce, there are five preserved in score by Dr. Aldrich, in Christ Church, Oxford; and six in Dr. Tudway's Collection, in the British Museum, which have never been published.

As French music was much better known in England during the reign of Charles the Second, than Italian; there are in the melodies of this composer, and in those of Purcell, passages which frequently remind us of Lulli, whom Charles pointed out to his musicians as a model. It is said, that the king sent Humphrey to Paris, to study under Lulli :

and besides his merit in composition, that he was an excellent performer on the lute. He seems indeed to have been the first among our ecclesiastical composers who had the least idea of musical pathos in the expression of words implying supplication or complaint.

JOHN BLOW, born at North Collingham, in Nottinghamshire, was likewise one of the first set of children of the chapel royal, after the Restoration. He likewise received instructions from Hingeston, domestic organist to Oliver Cromwell, and also from Dr. Christopher Gibbons. In 1673, he was sworn one of the gentlemen of the chapel; and in the following year, upon the decease of Humphrey, appointed master of the children.

In 1685, he was nominated one of the private music to king James the Second, and in 1687, he was likewise appointed almoner, and master of the choristers in the cathedral church of St. Paul; but he resigned this last place in 1693, in favour of his scholar, Jeremiah Clark. Blow obtained his degree of doctor in music by the special grace of archbishop Sancroft, without performing an exercise for it in either of the universities. On the decease of Parcell, in 1695, he was elected organist of St. Margaret's, Westminster. And in 1699, appointed composer of the chapel of their majesties, King

William and Queen Mary, at a salary of 40*l.* a year, which was afterwards augmented to 73*l.* A second composer, with a similar appointment, was added in 1715, when John Weldon was sworn into that office; at which time it was required, that each should produce a new anthem on the first Sunday of his month of waiting. Dr. Blow died in 1708. His compositions for the church, and his scholars, who arrived at eminence, have rendered his name venerable among the musicians of our country. There are three of his services, and ten full and verse anthems, printed by Dr. Boyce; some of them are doubtless in a very bold and grand style: he is, however, unequal, and frequently unhappy, in his attempts at new harmony and modulation.

The ballads of Dr. Blow are in general more smooth and natural than his other productions; but his melody is not of that graceful kind in which the Italians were at that time advancing to perfection with great rapidity. The collecting his secular compositions into a folio volume in 1700, under the title of *AMPHION ANGLICUS*, was doubtless occasioned by the great success of the *ORPHEUS BRITANNICUS*, which was a similar collection of PURCELL's dramatic and miscellaneous songs, published by his widow, in 1698. But whether Dr. Blow was stimulated to this publication by emulation, envy, or

the solicitation of his friends and pupils, by whom there are no less than fifteen encomiastic copies of verses prefixed to the work, the *ungrateful* public seem to have remained always insensible to these strains of the modern *Amphion*, which were not only incapable of building cities, but even of supporting their own tottering fame.

MICHAEL WISE, another of the three eminent composers for the church, who were fostered in the chapel royal immediately after the Restoration, was likewise a scholar of Captain Henry Cook, and contemporary with Humphrey and Blow; and they all three not only surpassed their master in genius and talents, but likewise all our church composers of the seventeenth century, except PURCELL. New melodies, modulations, and licences, which they slightly and timidly touched, their fellow student, Purcell, treated with the force and courage of a Michael Angelo, whose gigantic abilities rendered difficulties easy, and gave, to what in less powerful hands, would have been distortion, facility, and grace.

Dr. Boyce has printed six of his verse and full anthems, all of which are admirable; and in Dr. Tudway's Collection, in the British Museum, there are seven, and likewise an entire service in D minor. He was author also of the celebrated two part song, "Old Chiron thus preached to his pupil Achilles,"

which is too well known, and too generally admired to need any commendation here. Poor Michael was killed in a street-fray at Salisbury, by the watchman, in 1687. He was a native of that city, and appointed organist of the cathedral, and master of the choristers, in 1668, and in 1675, a gentleman of the chapel royal. In 1686, he was preferred to the place of almoner, and master of the boys at St. Paul's. He is said to have been in great favour with Charles the Second, and being appointed to accompany him in a journey, claimed, as the king's organist for the time, the privilege of playing to his Majesty on the organ, wherever he attended divine service.

The reign of Charles the Second being more favourable to the progress of our native church music, than any other, except that of Queen Elizabeth, we have been induced to dwell perhaps too long on this period of our history. The first set of chapel boys having matured into men so eminent as Humphrey, Wise, and Blow, our curiosity is excited in regard to the talents of their immediate successors; and this second class not only produced Dr. Turner and Dr. Tudway, who afterwards arrived at elevated stations, but also our country's pride, the inimitable HENRY PURCELL!!! who, during a short life, and in an age almost barbarous, in respect to every species

of music, except that of the church, discovered more original genius than any musician, under similar circumstances, in any part of Europe.

Though Tudway and Turner advanced far into the last century, they added so little to the progress of the art, by their productions or performance, that we shall take our leave of them as expeditiously as possible.

THOMAS TUDWAY, educated under Dr. Blow, at the same time with Turner and Purcell; was one of the second set of children of the chapel royal, after the Restoration; and was afterwards received into the choir at Windsor, as a tenor singer. In 1681, at twenty-five years of age, he was admitted to the degree of bachelor in music, at Cambridge; and in 1705, when Queen Anne visited that university, he composed an anthem, "Thou, O God! hast heard my vows," which he performed as an exercise for a doctor's degree, and after receiving that academical distinction, he was appointed public professor of music, which is merely honorary at Cambridge. In the latter part of his life Dr. Tudway resided chiefly in London, and was patronised by the Harley family: during which period the valuable scores of English church music, in six volumes quarto, now in the British Museum, No. 7337, were transcribed by himself.

It is said that he used to meet Prior, Sir James Thornhill, Christian the engraver, Bridgman, the gardener, and other eminent artists at Lord Oxford's once a week: and that Sir James drew all their portraits with a pencil. Tudway, among these, is sketched playing upon the harpsichord.

Prior wrote sportive verses under these drawings, which were in the possession of Mr. West, the late president of the Royal Society. Dr. Tudway's portrait is in the music school at Oxford: at Cambridge he was longer remembered as an inveterate punster, than as a great musician. When the Duke of Somerset was chancellor of Cambridge, during the discontents of several members of that university, at the rigour of his government, and the paucity of his patronage, Tudway, himself a malcontent, joining in the clamour, said "the chancellor rides us all, *without a bit in our mouths.*" Nor did the wicked sin of punning desert him even in sickness: for having been dangerously ill of a quinsey, and unable for some time to swallow either food or medicine: the physician who attended him, after long debates and difficulties, at length, turning to Mrs. Tudway, said, "Courage, Madam! the Doctor will get up May-Hill yet, he has been able to swallow some nourishment:" Tudway immediately exclaimed, "don't

“ mind him, my dear, *one swallow* makes no
“ summer.”

WILLIAM TURNER was sworn in Gentleman of the Royal Chapel, in 1669, as a counter-tenor singer, his voice settling to that pitch: a circumstance, which so seldom happens, *naturally*, that if it be cultivated, the possessor is sure of employment. Soon after his reception into the Chapel Royal, he was appointed vicar choral in the cathedral of St. Paul, and a lay-vicar of the Collegiate church of St. Peter, Westminster. In 1696, he was admitted to the degree of Doctor in Music, at Cambridge. He lived to the great age of 88, and dying in 1740, was buried in the cloister of Westminster Abbey, in the same grave with his wife; who, being nearly of the same age, died but four days before him, after living together in the utmost harmony near seventy years!

In many of our cathedral books there is an anthem, “ I will always give Thanks,” which is called “ *the Club Anthem*,” on account of its having been composed by three masters in conjunction: but not, as has been asserted by Dr. Boyce, and others “ as a “ memorial of the strict friendship that subsisted “ among them ;” for according to Dr. Tudway, who remembered the transaction, and has thus recorded it with the anthem, in the Mus. Collec. vol. 3. “ the

214 STATE OF MUSIC IN ENGLAND, DURING

“anthem was composed by order of Charles the
“Second, at a very short notice, on account of a
“victory by sea over the Dutch, the news of which
“arrived on Saturday, and the king, wishing to have
“the anthem performed the next day; and none of
“the masters choosing to undertake it, three of the
“children of the chapel, Humphrey, Blow, and
“Turner, performed the task.”

There are two whole services, and several anthems of Dr. Turner's composition in Tudway's Collection, together with an Ode for St. Cecilia's Day, 1697, with accompaniments for violins and trumpets. To this there is a long symphony or overture, consisting of two movements, the second of which is in triple time upon a ground, seemingly in imitation of Purcell, as the first movement is of Lulli.

Dr. CHRISTOPHER GIBBONS, son of Orlando Gibbons, already noticed, as having been appointed at the Restoration, principal organist of the Chapel Royal, and Westminster Abbey, and private organist to his Majesty, obtained a Doctor's degree in Music at Oxford, in consequence of a letter written by Charles himself in his behalf, which is inserted by Ant. Wood, in the *Fasti Oxon*: who says, that he completed his degree in an act, celebrated in St. Mary's church, on the 11th of July, 1664. The

compositions of this master never enjoyed a great degree of favour, and though some of them are preserved in the Museum collection, they have long ceased to be performed in our cathedrals. His abilities on the organ however must have been considerable, to have entitled him to the stations he filled, at a time, when the style of playing that instrument was so much more complicated and elaborate, than at present. The only church composer of this reign, whose works are still retained in our choral-service, of whom a particular account has not been already given, is BENJAMIN ROGERS. This musician was born at Windsor, and was brought up in that college under Dr. Nath. Giles: being employed there, first as a singing boy, and afterwards in the capacity of a singing man. Thence he went to Ireland, and was appointed organist of Christ Church in Dublin, where he continued till the breaking out of the rebellion in 1641: at which time being compelled to quit his station, he returned to Windsor, where he was re-instated as choir-man: but being soon after silenced in consequence of the civil war, he procured a subsistence by teaching in the neighbourhood. In 1658, by the assistance of his friend, Dr. Ingelo, he obtained the degree of Bachelor of Music at Cambridge, and acquired great reputation

in that university by his exercise. At the Restoration he was employed to compose the music to be performed at Guildhall on the day his Majesty and his brothers, the Dukes of York and Gloucester dined there with the Lord Mayor. About this time also, he was chosen organist of Eton college, which situation he soon after resigned, as being invited to Oxford, where he was appointed to the same office in Magdalen College. And in 1669, upon the opening of the new theatre in that city, he was created Doctor in Music. He continued, says Ant. Wood in the university, where he was much esteemed, till the year 1685, when he was ejected, in company with the fellows of this college, by King James the Second, after which he long resided in the skirts of the town, wholly disregarded.

The charter granted to the musicians of the city of Westminster by Charles the First, had lain dormant from that time till the Restoration; but immediately after that event, the persons named in it, who were still living, determined to rescue music from the disgrace into which it had fallen, and exert their authority for the improvement of the science, and the interest of its professors. Fifty-two musicians, consisting of the king's band and others, natives and foreigners, the most eminent of

the time, were enrolled in this charter, as the king's musicians. The powers granted by this charter allowed the corporation to meet from time to time, to make bye-laws, and impose fines on such as transgressed them: "*which fines they shall have to their own use,*" &c.

In pursuance of these powers, the corporation hired a room in Durham-yard, in the Strand, within the city and liberty of Westminster. Their first meeting was on the 22d day of October, 1661, Nicholas Lanier then being marshal: from which day they proceeded to summon, fine, and prosecute the first professors, who dared "to make any benefit or advantage of musique in England or Wales," without first taking out a licence from their fraternity. Among other instances of their arbitrary exercise of power, on the 13th of January, 1663, it was ordered, that "Matthew Lock, Christopher Gibbons, Dr. Charles Colman, and William Gregory, do come to the chamber in Durham-yard, on Thursday next, at two of the clock in the afternoon, and bring each of them ten pounds, or shew cause to the contrary."

This appears to have been one of the most oppressive, unmeaning, and useless, of the various monopolies, with which the Stuarts had long vexed the nation. Such a tyranny as this over the pro-

fessors of a liberal art, there is too much reason to fear would be abused, in whatever hands it was lodged. The College of Physicians, which superintends the dispensations of life and death, may have its use, in preventing or detecting empyricism; but that the ministers of our innocent amusements should be subject to any other controul, than that which the common law of the land is empowered to exercise over men of all ranks and degrees in the state, is at best but a wanton and useless, if not a noxious delegation of power; which, instead of being advantageous to the public, or accelerating the progress of the art, serves only to enable artists to torment and harass each other. It appears by the transactions of this corporation, the minutes of which are still extant, among the Harleian MS. in the British Museum, that the meetings of its members continued no longer than 1679: when, finding themselves involved in law-suits, and incapable of enforcing the power they assumed, and the penalties they threatened, it was thought advisable to leave the art, and its professors, to the neglect or patronage of the public.

The taste of Charles the Second in all things, and particularly in music, was that of a Frenchman. He had French operas, a band of twenty-four violins, in imitation of that at Paris; French masters

of his band, Cambert, and afterwards the contemptible Grabu: he sent Pelham Humphrey to study under Lulli, and young Banister to learn to play the violin at Paris. We must confess, however, though we have since had better models for our musical studies from Italy and Germany, that **MUSIC**, as well as every other liberal art, was at that time in a higher state of cultivation in France than in England.

But though Lulli carried Italian dramatic music into France, it was such only as had been produced during the infant state of the art in Italy; yet, notwithstanding the subsequent improvements which it received in its native country, from innumerable masters, particularly since they were furnished with lyric poetry by Metastasio, a century nearly elapsed, before our neighbours, the French, conceived it possible to compose better music than that of Lulli.

Upon the decease of Baltzar, the Lubecker, who was the original leader of King Charles's new band of twenty-four violins, Banister, the first Englishman who seems to have distinguished himself on that instrument, which was now growing into favour, was appointed his successor. This is the same Banister who set Dr. D'Avenant's *Circe*, and several airs and dialogues of the times—in which, how-

ever, no specific mark of genius is discernible. This musician was also the first who established lucrative concerts in London.

These concerts were advertised in the London Gazette of the times: and in No. 742, Dec. 30th, 1672, there is the following advertisement: "These
 " are to give notice, that at Mr. John Banister's
 " house, now called the Music School, over against
 " the George Taverne in White Friars, this present
 " Monday, will be musick performed by excellent
 " masters, beginning precisely at four of the clock
 " in the afternoon, and every afternoon for the fu-
 " ture, precisely at the same hour."

In Mr. North's manuscript *Memoirs of Music*, we have a more minute account of these performances. "Banister, having procured a large room in
 " White Friars, near the Temple-back-gate, and
 " erected an elevated box or gallery for the mu-
 " sicians, whose modesty required curtains: the
 " the rest of the room was filled with seats and
 " small tables, ale-house fashion. One shilling,
 " which was the price of admission, entitled the
 " audience to call for what they pleased. There
 " was very good music, for Banister found means
 " to procure the best hands in London, and some
 " voices to assist him. And there wanted no va-
 " riety, for Banister, besides playing on the violin,

“ did wonders on the flageolet to a thro’ base, and
 “ several masters likewise played solos.”

Banister, who died in 1679, had his first lessons in music from his father, who was one of the waits in the parish of St. Giles in the Fields. He left a son, John Banister, who became an eminent performer on the violin: he was one of King William’s band, and played the first violin at Drury Lane, when operas were first performed there. Mr. North says, “ It would be endless to mention all the elegant
 “ graces vocal, and instrumental, which are taught
 “ by the Italian masters, and perhaps outdone by
 “ the English Banister.”

In 1678, about a year before the decease of the elder Banister, the club, or private concert, established by THOMAS BRITTON, the celebrated small-coal-man, in Clerkenwell, had its beginning, and continued till 1714*.

* Thomas Britton, the famous musical small-coal-man, was born at Higham Ferrers, in Northamptonshire. Thence he went to London, where he bound himself apprentice to a small-coal-man, in St. John Baptist’s Street. After he had served his full time of seven years, his master gave him a sum of money not to set up. Upon this Tom went into Northamptonshire; and after he had spent his money, returned again to London, set up the small-coal trade, notwithstanding

About the year 1680, the principal masters in London perceiving an eagerness in the public for

his master was still living; and, withal, he took a stable, and turned it into a house, which stood the next door to the little gate of St. John's of Jerusalem, next Clarken-well Green. Some time after he had settled here, he became acquainted with Dr. Garenciers, his next neighbour, by which means he became an excellent chymist, and perhaps he performed such things as had never been done before in that profession, with so little cost and charge, by the help of a moving elaboratory, contrived and built by himself, which was much admired by all of that faculty that happened to see it; insomuch, that a certain gentleman of Wales was so much taken with it, that he was at the expence of carrying him down into that country, on purpose to build him such another, which Tom performed to the gentleman's very great satisfaction, and for the same he received from him a very handsome and generous gratuity. Besides his great skill in chymistry, he was as famous for his knowledge in the theory of music; in the practical part of which faculty he was likewise very considerable.

He had, moreover, a considerable collection of musical instruments, which were sold for fourscore pounds, upon his death, which happened in September 1714, being upwards of threescore years of age; and lies

musical performances, had a room built, and purposely fitted up for concerts, in York Buildings, where the best compositions and performers of the times were patronised by the first people in London. This was called the *Music Meeting*. And this room for upwards of half a century continued to be the principal place to which the lovers of harmony resorted, to attend the benefit concerts of the most eminent professors of the art.

Having enumerated the most remarkable musical events of this long and cheerful reign, it is time to conclude this letter:—the next shall be devoted to the most eminent of English musicians, HENRY PURCELL.

I am, &c.

buried in the church-yard of Clarken-well, without monument or inscription, being attended to his grave in a very solemn and decent manner, by a great concourse of people, especially of such as frequented the musical club, that was kept for many years at his own charges (he being a man of a very generous and liberal spirit) at his own little cell.—The above note is copied from Hearne, and inserted in Sir John Hawkins's *History of Music*, to which the reader is referred for a very curious and interesting account of this worthy, poor man. See Vol. V. page 73, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

July 21st, 1813.

HENRY PURCELL.

IN tracing the progress of English music through the reigns of James and Charles the First, the gloomy æra of the Protectorate, and the days of revelry of Charles the Second, we have found among secular compositions little to admire. In fact, almost the whole of the above period—may, in a musical point of view, be considered as the reign of dullness and insipidity.

It is therefore with peculiar pleasure that we are now permitted, in the course of our labours, to speak of HENRY PURCELL, who, considered as a musician, is as justly the pride of an Englishman, as Shakespeare in dramatic productions, Milton in epic poetry, Locke in metaphysics, or Sir Isaac Newton in mathematics and philosophy.

Unluckily for Purcell, he built his fame with such perishable materials, that the knowledge of his worth and works is daily diminishing, while the reputation

of our poets and philosophers increases daily by the study and utility of their productions. And so much of our great musician's celebrity is already consigned to tradition, that it will soon be as difficult to find his songs, or at least to *hear* them, as those of his predecessors Orpheus and Amphion, with which Cerberus was lulled to sleep, or the city of Thebes constructed.

HENRY PURCELL was born in 1658. His father Henry, and uncle Thomas Purcell, were both musicians, and gentlemen of the Chapel Royal, at the Restoration. From whom Henry received his first instructions in music cannot be ascertained. But his father dying in 1664, when he was only six years old, it is probable, that he was qualified for a chorister by Capt. Cook, who was master of the children from the Restoration, till his death in 1672. As Purcell was appointed organist of Westminster Abbey at eighteen years of age, he must have learned the elements of his art at an early period of his life. He certainly was taught to sing in the King's Chapel, and received lessons from Pelham Humphrey, Cook's successor, till his voice broke; an accident, which usually happens to youth at sixteen or seventeen years of age.

After this, perhaps, he had a few lessons on composition from Dr. Blow, which were sufficient to

cancel all the instructions he had received from other masters, and to occasion the boast inscribed on his tomb-stone, that he had been

“ Master to the famous Mr. Henry Purcell.”

Nothing is more common than this petty larceny among musicians. If the first master has drudged eight or ten years with a pupil of genius, and it is thought necessary, in compliance with fashion or caprice, that he should receive a few lessons from a second, the persevering assiduity of the first and principal instructor is usually forgotten, while the second arrogates to himself the *whole* honour, both of the talents and cultivation of his new scholar.

Purcell is said to have profited so much from his first lessons, and early application, as to have composed, while a singing boy in the chapel, many of his anthems, which have been constantly sung in our cathedrals ever since. Eighteen was a very early age for the appointment of organist of Westminster Abbey, one of the first cathedrals in the kingdom for choral compositions and performance. It was not likely he would stop here: the world is more partial to promising youth, than to accomplished age. At twenty-four, in 1682, he was promoted to one of the three places of organist of the Chapel

Royal, on the death of Edward Low, the successor of Dr. Christopher Gibbons, in the same station. After this, he produced so many admirable compositions for the church and chapel, of which he was organist, and where he was certain of having them better performed than elsewhere, that his fame soon extended to the remotest parts of the kingdom. From this time, his anthems were procured with eagerness, and heard with pious rapture wherever they could be performed; nor was he long suffered to devote his talents exclusively to the service of the church. He was very early in life solicited to compose for the stage and chamber, in both which undertakings he was so decidedly superior to all his predecessors, that his compositions seemed to speak a new and more intelligible language. His songs contain whatever the ear could then wish, or heart feel. In fact no other vocal music was listened to with pleasure, for nearly thirty years after Purcell's death: when they gave way only to the favourite opera songs of Handel.

The unlimited powers of this musician's genius, embraced every species of composition that was then known, with equal felicity. In writing for the *church*, whether he adhered to the elaborate and learned style of his great predecessors, Tallis, Bird, and Gibbons, in which no instrument is employed but

the organ, and the several parts moving in fugue, imitation, or plain counterpoint; or, on the contrary, giving way to feeling and imagination, adopted the new and more expressive style, of which he was himself one of the principal inventors, accompanying the voice parts with instruments, to enrich the harmony, and enforce the melody and meaning of the words, he manifested equal abilities and resources. In compositions for the *theatre*, though the colouring and effects of an orchestra were then but little known, yet as he employed them more than his predecessors, and gave to the voice a melody more interesting and impassioned, than during that century had been heard in this country, or even, perhaps, in Italy, he soon became the delight and darling of the nation.* And in the several species of *chamber music*, which he attempted, whether

* He produced the overture and act tunes for *Abdalar*, a tragedy, written by Mrs. Behn, and acted at the Duke's Theatre, in 1677, when he was only nineteen; those to *Timon of Athens*, altered from Shakespeare by Shadwell, in 1678; and those to *Theodosius, or the Force of Love*, by Nat. Lee, in 1680: the songs and processional music of which, are to this day occasionally performed.

sonatas for instruments, or odes, cantatas, songs, ballads and catches for the voice, he so far surpassed whatever our country had produced or imported before, that all other musical compositions seemed to have been instantly consigned to contempt and oblivion.

Many of his numerous compositions for the church, particularly those printed in the second and third volumes of Dr. Boyce's Collection, are still retained in our cathedrals, and in the King's chapel.

The superior genius of Purcell, can be fairly estimated by those only who make themselves acquainted with the state of music previous to his time; compared with which, his productions for the church, if not more learned, will be found infinitely more varied and expressive: and his *secular* compositions appear to have descended from another more happy region, with which neither his predecessors nor contemporaries had any communication.

Besides the whole service, with three full and six versé anthems, in Dr. Boyce's Collection, there are nine verse and full anthems wholly different, still sung in the cathedral at York.* And in Dr. Tad-

* See Mason's Collection of those portions of Scripture and the Liturgy, which are sung as anthems in the cathedral churches of England, and published for the use of the church of York, 1782.

way's collection, in the British Museum, there are, besides a whole service in B flat, different from that in Boyce, eight full and verse anthems, different from all the rest, four of which were composed for the Chapel Royal of Charles the Second, with instrumental accompaniments. And, exclusive of these, and the hymns printed in the two books of *Harmonia Sacra*, in a MS. bequeathed to Christ Church, Oxford, by Dr. Aldrich, there are two motets, and a Gloria Patri for four and five voices in Latin, with seven psalms and hymns for three and four voices by our fertile and diligent composer, which have all their peculiar merit, while some of them may, without hyperbole, be said to reach the true sublime of sacred music.

To enter into a critical examination of Purcell's numerous compositions, would exceed the limits, and be foreign to the purpose of this work: we cannot, however, avoid a few remarks on his *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*.

It has been erroneously imagined, that these were originally composed for the feast of the Song of the Clergy; and Dr. Tudway says positively, that the *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* of Mr. Henry Purcell, were intended for the opening of the new church of St. Paul; and though he did not live to see it finished, they were afterwards performed three

several times, when Queen Anne went thither in state. The following title to a printed copy in the library of Christ Church, Oxford, incontestably confutes both these opinions. "*Te Deum and Jubilate*, " for voices and instruments, made for St. Cecilia's " Day, 1694, by Henry Purcell."

The custom, since Purcell's time, of opening this magnificent and venerable hymn with an overture or symphony, which Handel and Graun have done so powerfully, renders the beginning of our countryman's composition somewhat abrupt, and inferior in dignity to the subject. There is, however, a stroke of genius, boldness, and effect, in the four last bars of the first line, where the discords are struck by the trumpets, and resolved by the violins, which marks the great musician.

There is likewise a grandeur in the movement, and richness in the harmony of the chorus, "*All, all the earth doth worship thee*;" and the distribution of the parts in ascending after each other, by the harmonic intervals of the perfect chord, has a beautiful effect. But all the composers of this hymn, seem to have mistaken the cry of joy for that of sorrow, in setting "*To thee all angels cry aloud*." Here Purcell, as well as Handel, has changed his key from major to minor, and in modulation admirable in itself, has given the movement a pathetic

expression, which in reading, and considering the idea of that eternal praise, which the heavenly hosts offer up to the throne of God, it does not seem to require.

The cherubim and seraphim singing *in duo*, and the universal acclaim of *holy*, are certainly most happily designed, and expressed almost with the energy of inspiration. And in the choruses and disposition of the whole work, Purcell is still, and ever will continue, admirable among Englishmen, as long as the present language of this hymn shall remain intelligible.

"*Also the Holy Ghost the comforter,*" is a delightful fragment of harmony and melody, which time can never injure: and "*Thou art the King of Glory,*" in double fugue, is grand and masterly. "*When thou tookest upon thee,*" and "*When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death,*" have permanent beauties of melody, contrivance, and expression, that are wholly out of the reach of fashion. The whole movement of "*O Lord! save thy people,*" in which the sound is truly an eccho to the sense; and likewise the expression of the words, "*Lift them up for ever,*" is admirable.

The supplication at the words, "*Have mercy upon us,*" is truly pathetic; but the short fugue, "*Let me never be confounded,*" though regular,

might have been written by a man of less genius than Purcell.

The opening of the *Jubilate* is well calculated to display a fine performer, and, therefore, the military cast which is given to the whole air, *may* be proper : it does not, however, appear to us to be exactly appropriate. Yet Purcell, and all his contemporaries in England, were of a different opinion, as it prevails too generally in all their works.

"*Be ye sure,*" &c. if sung with taste and feeling, will always be good music, and so will the next movement, as long as the science of music shall be had in reverence. In the verse, "*For the Lord is gracious,*" Purcell has displayed his uncommon powers of expression, particularly at "*His mercy is everlasting,*" which is exquisite composition. The *Gloria Patri, alla Palestrina*, but more animated, perhaps, than any movement that Palestrina was ever permitted to compose, abounds with such science and contrivance, as musicians can alone properly appreciate ; but the general effect of the whole is so glorious and sublime, that it cannot but charm into rapture the most ignorant, as well as the most scientific hearer.

These admirable compositions were constantly performed at St. Paul's on the feast of the Sons of the Clergy, from the decease of the author in 1695

till the year 1713, when Handel's *Te Deum* for the Peace of Utrecht was produced by command of Queen Anne. From which period, till 1743, when Handel's second *Te Deum* for the Battle of Dettingen was composed, they seem to have been alternately performed. Since that time, Purcell's *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* have been but seldom executed, even at the triennial meetings of the three choirs of Hereford, Worcester, and Gloucester. Handel's superior knowledge and use of instruments, and more polished melody, added to the novelty of his productions, took such entire possession of the national favour, that Purcell's *Te Deum* is now only performed occasionally as an antique curiosity.

Our author's *theatrical compositions*, if we recollect the number and excellence of his productions; for the church, and the shortness of his life, will surprise by their multiplicity. Of those dramas which are called operas, in which music was the principal allurements held out to the public, a more detailed account will be given in speaking of the origin and progress of the musical drama in England previous to the introduction of the Italian language, music, and performers on our lyric stage.

Of his detached and incidental songs, dialogues, and scenes, which were performed at our national theatre, those whose merits are most promi-

ment will be mentioned in speaking of the ORPHEUS BRITANNICUS, or posthumous collection of his miscellaneous compositions. But before we enter on an examination of this work, it is necessary to acquaint the reader, that the chief part of his *instrumental* music for the play-house is included in a publication that appeared two years after his decease, under the title of "A Collection of Ayres composed for the Theatre, and on other Occasions, by the late Mr. Henry Purcell. London, printed for Frances Purcell, Executrix of the Author, 1697."

These *Airs* are in four parts, for two violins, tenor and bass, and continued to be played as overtures, and act tunes, till they were superseded by Handel's hautbois concertos, as those were by his overtures, while Boyce's sonatas, and Arne's compositions, served as act-tunes. In process of time these were supplanted by Martini's concertos and sonatas, which, in their turn, were abandoned for the symphonies of Van Malden, and the sonatas of the elder Stamitz. Afterwards, the trios of Campioni, Zanetti, and Abel, came into play, and then the symphonies of Stamitz, Canabich, Holtzbauer, and other Germans, with those of Abel, Bach, and Giardini; which, having done their duty, "slept with their fathers," and gave way to those of

Vanhall, Pleyel, and Boccherini, which are now gradually sinking into insignificance, being all completely eclipsed by the stupendous grandeur of Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart, Cherubini, and some others, whose symphonies are the delight and admiration of the present day. " Sic transit gloria musicorum," so transitory is the musician's fame!!

Purcell appears to have composed introductory music to most of the plays that were brought on the stage during his time. The publication by his widow above-mentioned, contains his overtures and songs to the following dramas :

Abelazar, 1677. The music of this consists of an overture, and eight airs or tunes.

The Virtuous Wife, 1680. Overture, and seven airs.

Indian Queen. The first movement of this overture is equal to any of Handel's. There are likewise two or three trumpet tunes, well calculated for the instrument, and a rondeau at the end, which would now seem new, if played in a concert by a good band.

Dioclesian, or the Prophetess, 1690. The instrumental music of this English opera consists of an overture of two movements, the first excellent in the style of Lulli; also of a *preludio*, accompaniment

to a song, trumpet tune, air, hornpipe, country-dance, and *canaries*.*

King Arthur, 1691. Overture, and twelve tunes.

Amphitruon, 1691. Overture, and eight tunes.

Gordian Knot untied, 1691. Overture, and seven tunes.

Distressed Innocence, or the Princess of Persia, 1691. Overture, and seven tunes, all proofs of the author's original genius.

The Fairy Queen, 1692. Two overtures, and sixteen tunes of different kinds. No. 12, an air, 4. in 2, is a very curious canon on two subjects: the first treble and bass performing one, and the second and tenor the other. There is as much accent and spirit in this composition, as if it were in free counterpoint.

The Old Bachelor, 1693. Overture, and eight tunes.

The Married Beau, 1694. Overture, and eight tunes, among which is a very agreeable air for the trumpet, a march, and a hornpipe, that are characteristic. This last is very much in the style of a Spanish *fandango*.

* A French term for a rapid dance in jig time.

The Double Dealer, 1694. Overture, and ten tunes. Nos. 6 and 9, are pretty and curious.

Bonduca, 1695. Overture, and ten tunes, including "*Britons strike home*," and "*To Arms*," in four parts.

These are the contents of this posthumous publication. He likewise composed overtures, act tunes, and songs, for *Timon of Athens*, 1678; for *Theodosius*, in 1680; for *Dryden's Tempest*, in 1690; and for *Don Quizotte*, in 1694.

Few of Purcell's single songs appear to have been printed during his life. The collection of his vocal secular music, which reflects the greatest honour on his memory, and long rendered his name dear to the English nation, was published by his widow, two years after his decease, under the title of ORPHEUS BRITANNICUS. Here were treasured up the songs, from which the natives of this island received their first great delight and impression from the vocal music of a *single voice*. Before that period, we had cultivated madrigals and songs in parts, with diligence and success; but in all single songs, till those of Purcell appeared, the principal effects were produced from the *words*, and not the *melody*; for the airs, antecedent to Purcell's time, were as mis-shapen as if they had been composed of notes scattered about by chance, instead of being cast in a regular mould.

Exclusive admirers of modern symmetry and elegance may call Purcell's taste barbarous ; yet, in defiance of superior cultivation and refinement, and of every vicissitude of fashion, through all his rudeness and barbarism, original genius, feeling and passion, are and ever will be discernible in his works by candid and competent judges of the art.

To this admirable collection are prefixed (according to the custom of the times) seven copies of verses to his memory, at the head of which is an ode, written on his death by Dryden ; this ode was set by Dr. Blow, and performed at the Concert Room in York Buildings: the music was published in 1696, the year after our favourite musician's decease. It is composed of fugue and imitation, and is learned and masterly, but appears laboured, and is wholly destitute of the essential requisites of invention and pathos ; while the poetry by Dryden rather degenerates into the opposite extreme.

Dryden had a very particular attachment to our admirable musician, which was not wholly generated by his genius and success in setting so many of our great poet's poems, but in some measure from the circumstance of Purcell having had the honour of professionally instructing his lady, the Right Hon. Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the Earl of

Berkshire, to whom Mrs. Purcell dedicated the *Orpheus Britannicus*.

In this dedication, the widow observes, that her ladyship had generously prevented her intended performance of the duty she owed his ashes, by erecting a fair monument over him, and gracing it with an inscription which may perpetuate both the marble and his memory.

The following is the inscription, which, from the passage just cited, has not improbably been attributed to Dryden :

Here lies
Henry Purcell, Esquire,
Who left this life,
And is gone to that blessed Place
Where only his Harmony
Can be exceeded.
Obiit 21 mo. die Novembris,
Anno ætatis suæ 37 mo.
Anno Domini, 1695.

The public are greatly indebted to Mr. Corfe, and Dr. Clarke of Cambridge, both of whom have published very excellent selections from the secular works of this great musician, under the title of *The Beauties of Purcell*. Were it not for such occa-

sional meritorious exertions, on the part of professors, it is greatly to be feared that the stream of oblivion would, in a few years, draw into their insatiable vortex the productions of Purcell, and even Handel, their names, like those of many of their predecessors, might float awhile on the surface, when their works were buried in the abyss beneath.

Feeling an enthusiastic attachment to the fame of our truly English musician, and anxious to contribute our mite to draw the public attention to a fair examination of the characteristic and manly strains which abound in every part of his productions, we venture to point out to our readers a few of the beauties to be met with in both of the works above-mentioned.

"Ye twice ten hundred Deities," opens with, perhaps, the best piece of recitative in our language. The words are admirably expressed throughout this song, by modulation as well as melody; and there is a propriety in the changes of movement which does as much honour to Purcell's judgment as the whole composition to his genius. If ever it could be said of a composer, that he had *devancé son siècle*, Purcell is entitled to that praise. The music in King Arthur is well known, and frequently performed: in this there are movements, particularly in the duet, "*Two daughters of this aged Stream*," and "*Fairest Isle all Isles excelling*," which the lapse of a cen-

tury has not injured. These do not, perhaps, contain a single passage which the best of modern composers would reject.

“From rosy Bowers,” is said to have “been set in his last sickness;” at which time he seems to have realized the poetical fable of the Swan, and to have sung more sweetly as he approached his dissolution.

The variety of movement, the artful, yet pathetic modulation, and above all, the exquisite expression of the words, render it one of the most affecting compositions extant, to every *Englishman* who regards music, not merely as an agreeable arrangement and combination of sounds, but as the vehicle of sentiment, and the voice of passion. To those who understand the full power of our language, and feel the force, spirit, and shade of meaning, which every word bears according to its place in a sentence, may we not venture to repeat, that this unrivalled composition will have charms and effects, which, perhaps, Purcell’s music *only* can produce.

“Where Myra sings,” is a duet that will ever be captivating, as long as the words remain intelligible, of which he has augmented the force by notes the most select and expressive that the musical scale can furnish.

“*Lost is my quiet,*” is another duet, still in its bloom. And “*Celebrate this Festival,*” a birth-day

song for Queen May, is still graceful and pleasing, notwithstanding its old-fashioned thoughts and embellishments.

"*I'll sail upon the Dog Star,*" has all the fire of Handel's prime.

Mad Bess is a song so celebrated, that it needs no panegyric or renewal of public attention, as every captivating English singer revives its memory.*

"*Let Caesar and Urania live,*" was a duet in a Birth Day Ode during the reign of William and Mary, which continued so long in favour, that not only while these sovereigns jointly wielded the sceptre, but even when George the Second had lost his

* The late Mrs. Sheridan and Mrs. Bates never gave more exquisite delight by their admirable talents, than when they regaled their friends with their song. Many of our readers remember Madame Mara's excellent performance of it; and we still possess Mrs. Billington, no way inferior to any of her predecessors, though we have to regret her retirement from public life.

Mr. Beard, about fifty years ago, gained great applause by singing "*Rosy Bowers*;" and Frasi, by her performance of *Mad Bess* at the concerts at Hickford's Room, the Castle, and King's Arms, where Mr. Stanley was justly admired for his ingenious and masterly manner of accompanying them.

royal consort, and there ceased to be a Urania, for whom to offer up prayers, Dr. Greene, and after him Dr. Boyce, used frequently to introduce it into their own, and the laureat's new odes. The latter part of this duet is extremely beautiful.

"*I attempt from Love's Sickness to fly*," is an elegant little ballad, which, though long dead, might easily be re-animated, and brought into fashion by the voice of any favourite singer, who might be disposed to try the experiment.

The short scene in *Bonduca*, beginning with the words, "*Hear ye Gods of Britain*," abounds in beauties of various kinds. The introductory sentence just cited has anticipated a species of dramatic music which has been supposed of recent invention. It is set in an *accompanied* recitative *a tempo*, or *Aria parlante*.

It is said that Queen Mary having expressed her entire approbation of the old Scotch tune, "*cold and raw*," Purcell made it a perpetual bass to an air in the next birth-day ode, 1602, beginning, "*May her blest example chase*," a piece of pleasantry which is likewise said to have been occasioned by her Majesty asking for this tune, after Mr. Gostling, one of the gentlemen of the Chapel Royal, and the celebrated Mrs. Arabella Hunt, with Purcell to accompany them on the harpsichord, had exerted their

united talents to amuse so great a personage with compositions, which they, *mistakenly*, thought of a superior class.

The pleasing melody and harmony, and the ingenious design and variety of movement, in the duet, "*I spy Celia*," cannot but afford considerable entertainment to Purcell's admirers, and indeed, to the admirers of English music in general.

Bonduca, of which he set the songs in the last year of his life, 1695 ; and "the *Prophetess*, or History of Dioclesian," which he set entirely after it was transformed into an opera by Dryden, were both originally written by Beaumont and Fletcher. Purcell's music for the last was performed at the Queen's Theatre, 1690, and published by himself in score in 1691.

In this opera, the ballad air, "*What shall I do, to show how much I love her?*" after it had done its duty to these words upwards of thirty years, became the favourite tune in the BEGGAR'S OPERA, from its first performance in 1727, to the present time, where it is adapted to the words, "*Virgins are like the fair flower in its lustre*," &c.

It does not appear that in Purcell's time any of the works of Corelli had been published even in Italy ; and though, a few years before his death, they might have been brought hither and circulated in manuscript, yet they were not sold at any of our

music shops till 1710 ; so that Purcell had no better Italian instrumental music to imitate, than that of Bassani, Torelli, and others inferior to them. Yet are his sonatas infinitely superior in fancy, modulation, design, and contrivance, to every production of that description anterior to the works of Corelli.

In regard to his models for vocal music, we may discern his obligations to Carissimi in the best of his recitatives, and to Lulli in the worst ; and it is evident that he admired Stradella's *manner* of writing, though he scorned to pillage his passages.

We must not take our leave of Purcell's vocal music, without a grateful memorial of his CATCHES, ROUNDS, and GLEES, of which the humour, originality, and melody, were so congenial with the national taste, as to render them almost the sole productions of that facetious character, in general use for nearly fourscore years ; and though the countenance, and premiums recently bestowed upon this species of composition, united with the modern refinements in melody and performance, have given birth to many GLEES of a more elegant, graceful, and exalted kind, than any which Purcell produced ; yet he seems hardly ever to have been equalled in the wit, pleasantry, and contrivance of his CATCHES.

We shall here conclude our history of Henry Purcell, which we fear, by many *italianized* readers,

may be considered already too circumstantial. Had his short life been protracted, we might perhaps have had a school of secular music of our own, which we cannot to this day boast of. In many instances he has surpassed even Handel, in the expression of *English* words and national feeling; and we may fairly sum up his merits as a musician in a single sentence. His beauties in composition were entirely his own, while his occasional barbarisms may be considered as unavoidable compliances with the false taste of the age in which he lived.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

July 24th, 1813.

PROGRESS OF MUSIC IN ITALY, IN THE CHURCH
AND CHAMBER, DURING THE SEVENTEENTH
CENTURY.

FROM the year 1600 to the present time, dramatic music, which, occasionally, includes almost every species of composition, vocal and instrumental, will occupy so large a portion of the sequel of this work,

that it will be necessary to treat the other branches of the art in a more summary way than heretofore, while there was little other music to describe than masses and madrigals.

Though the learned and elaborate style both of the music of the church and chamber, continued to be cultivated in Italy with great diligence, till near the middle of the century, yet a revolution in favour of melody and expression was preparing, even in sacred music, by the success of dramatic composition, consisting of recitation and melodies for a single voice, which now began to be preferred to music of many parts, in which canons, fugues, and full harmony, principally engaged the master's study, and the hearer's attention.

About this period, LUDOVICO VIADANA has the reputation of having invented the indication of chords by figures, in what the Italians call the *Basso continuo*, and the English *Thorough-bass*. Draudius, in an ample list of this writer's ecclesiastical compositions, which were very numerous, tells us of one which authenticates his claim to the invention. This was a collection of all his choral pieces, of one, two, three, and four parts, "with a *continued and general* " *Bass*, adapted to the organ, according to a *new* " invention, and useful for every singer, as well as organist; to which are added, Short Rules and Ex-

“planations for accompanying a general Bass, according to the new Method.”

VIADANA, therefore, was the first who composed an *Organ Bass*, different from the voice part, in the execution of which the newly-invented figures enabled the performer to give the singers the whole harmony of the several parts of a full composition without seeing the score.

The two MAZZOCHI, Domenico and Virgilio, brothers and Romans, were musicians of great eminence in the early part of the seventeenth century. Of Domenico, we shall have further occasion to speak, as one of the last successful madrigalists, when the favour of that species of composition began to decline. Virgilio was principal Maestro di Capella to the Pope, and the master of Bontempi, the musical historian.

FRESCOBALDI, likewise, the celebrated organist, and composer of fugues for his instrument, in a more clear and pleasing style than any of his predecessors, and who flourished from 1608 to 1635, produced many motets and masses for the church.

But the two most learned composers of this period, were GREGORIO ALLEGRI, the author of the celebrated *Miserere*, which is still sung in the Papal Chapel during Passion Week; and ORAZIO BENEVOLI, whose skill and dexterity in polyphonic

harmony, has already been mentioned in the course of this work.

ERCOLE BERNABEI, the scholar and successor of Benevoli at St. Peter's, and the instructor of the admirable Abate Steffani, may be ranked among the greatest masters of harmony, in the ancient ecclesiastical style. Being invited by the Elector of Bavaria to Munich, about the year 1650, he entered into the service of that court, where he continued during the remainder of his life. These masters, with many other good harmonists, in the style of the preceding century, supplied the churches of Italy with innumerable compositions, in which the chief merit consisted in pure harmony, and the contrivance of canon, fugue, and imitation, on simple and often insipid subjects; but to these excellencies, the best modern composers have added melody, a more varied modulation, and not only an attention to long and short syllables, but to the expression of words and sentiment. In the fifteenth century, almost every mass was composed upon the subject of some well known song or ballad; but these airs being psalmodic, and little more lively and varied than *canto fermo*, admitted of no greater variety of modulation, than the ancient chants of the church, upon fragments of which, during the sixteenth and part of the seventeenth century, it was thought necessary to construct the chief part of choral music.

The church style of composition, however, underwent a material alteration during the seventeenth century, not only by the imitation of dramatic music, and the introduction of instruments, but by writing in transposed keys, and supplying the deficiencies in the scale, which too strict an adherence to the *MODES* of the church had occasioned.

Indeed, before this time, there was no decision of keys, either in sacred or secular music, according to our present rules of beginning and ending upon the chord major or minor, of some determinate note of the scale.

Though much music was produced during these times, which might please the *ear* by the sweetness of the harmony, yet, previous to the productions of Carissimi and Stradella, nothing appeared capable of enchanting the *heart* by the resistless charm of pathetic melody. Of the works of these eloquent musicians, who had the undefinable power of rendering every musical phrase interesting, either by melody, harmony, or modulation, a particular account will hereafter be given, in treating of *oratorios* and *cantatas*.

Domenico Mazzochi, already mentioned among the last of the successful madrigalists, besides many new combinations, first proposed several refinements in the execution of his madrigals, and invented

characters for *crescendo*, *decrescendo*, &c. The only masters after him, who distinguished themselves in that line, were Stradella, Alessandro Scarlatti, Bononcini, Lotti, Perti, and Caldara, of whom we shall have occasion to speak among the most eminent composers of operas and cantatas.

Music, *merely* instrumental, seems rarely to have been composed previous to the latter end of the seventeenth century. Lutes and guitars of different sizes, were chiefly used in accompanying the voice. Viols and violins had a similar employment in churches: where also that noble and most comprehensive of all instruments, the organ, acquired new dignity and attractions, from the masterly fugues, and execution of the celebrated Frescobaldi, in the early part of that century.

GIROLAMO FRESCOBALDI was a native of Ferrara, who settled at Rome early in life, with his master Milleville, where he was elected organist of St. Peter's. All the musical writers of Italy, have celebrated his talents; and his works which still exist, are indisputable vouchers for the truth of their encomiums. Quadrio says, that in his youth as a singer, he delighted every ear, and was praised by every tongue, in the principal cities of Italy. But his chief excellence consisted in composing and playing on the organ and harpsichord, for which he

became so renowned, that his works were in the hands of all professors and collectors of musical compositions. The fugues of Frescobaldi have great merit, if we consider the state of instrumental music at the period when they were produced: the subjects are marked and pleasing, the harmony pure, and the style chaste and clear.

Towards the conclusion of the seventeenth century, a species of learned and elaborate chamber duets for voices, began to be in favour: the earliest of these were composed by JOHN BONONCINI, and published at Bologna, in 1691. Soon after, those of the admirable ABATE STEFFANI were dispersed in manuscript throughout Europe.

These were followed by the duets of CLARI, HANDEL, MARCELLO, GASPARINI, LOTTI, HASSE, and DURANTE.

Notwithstanding the purity of harmony, ingenuity of design, and imitation, and masterly style of these compositions, there is a radical imperfection in the plan with respect to the expression of the words, and propriety of two persons repeating and joining in the same complaint or sentiment, whatever it may be, instead of preserving two distinct characters, as in modern dramatic duets. Perhaps, these chamber duets were originally intended as *studii* for singers,

in which the passages being echoed in fugue, excited emulation in the performance, and furnished an opportunity of comparing the rapidity and neatness of their execution, as the comparative speed of two racers, is best ascertained by their *running a trial*.

AGOSTINO STEFFANI, a scholar of the elder Bernabei, was born in 1655. Germans claim him as their countryman; yet Handel, and the Italians, say, that he was a native of Castello Franco, in the Venetian territory.

During his youth he was a chorister at St. Mark's, where his voice was so much admired by a German nobleman, that, obtaining his dismissal, he took him to Munich, and gave him an education, not only in music, under the celebrated Ercole Bernabei, but also in literature and theology sufficient for priest's orders. In consequence of which, after ordination, he was distinguished by the title of Abate, which he retained till late in life, when he was elected Bishop of Spiga. In 1674, at the age of nineteen, he published his Psalms in eight parts; but his chamber duets are the most celebrated of his works. Between the years 1695 and 1699, he set the following Italian operas for the court of Hanover, where he resided many years as Maestro di Capella: *Alessandro, Orlando, Enrico, Alcide*,

Alcibiade, *Atalanta*, and *Il Trionso del Fato*; which were afterwards translated into German, and performed to his music at Hamburg.

About the year 1724, after he had quitted the court of Hanover, where he is said to have resigned his office, as Maestro di Capella, to Handel, he was elected President of the Academy of Ancient Music in London.

In 1729, he went into Italy to visit his native country and relations, but returned the next year to Hanover.

Soon after, having some business to transact at Franckfort, he was there seized with an indisposition, of which in a few days he died, in the eightieth year of his age. There are, perhaps, no compositions more correct, or fugues in which the subjects are more pleasing, than those in a collection of his duets, made for Queen Caroline, and now in the possession of his Majesty, amounting to nearly one hundred. The greatest singers of Italy used to exercise themselves in the performance of them. The widow of the late Dr. Arne, assured Dr. Burney, that she had frequently heard Senesino and Strada sing them, during their morning studies.

FRANCESCO DURANTE, whose duets have superseded all others in the estimation of great singers and professors, was Master of the Conservatorio of

Sant' Onofrio at Naples, and regarded as the greatest harmonist, as well as the best instructor, of his time. Among his pupils, he had the honour to number PERGOLESI, TERRADELLAS, PICCINI, SACCHINI, TRAETTA, GUGLIELMI, and PAESIELLO. His masses and motets are still in use, and are considered models of correct writing, by the students of the several conservatorios of Naples. His duets were formed from the airs of his own master Alessandro Scarlatti's cantatas. They are more in dialogue than fugue, or duo; but composed of the most select, beautiful, and impassioned traits of melody, which the creative genius of the elder Scarlatti had ever invented; and are put together with such science, that it seems as if art and refinement, in this species of composition, had attained their utmost perfection. Sacchini, who used to teach these duets to his favourite scholars, seldom finished his lesson without kissing the book. And, indeed, when well performed in a select company, they afford lovers of such refined and artificial composition, a pleasure the most exquisite that vocal music can bestow.

CONCERTOS, merely instrumental, do not appear to have existed anterior to the time of CORELLI. The honour of this invention has been assigned to Torelli, his contemporary, but from no sufficient authority.

GIAMBATISTA BASSANI, of Bologna, the violin master of Corelli, seems to have been the first who understood the full powers, and wrote with complete success, for that wonderful instrument.

Bassani was a man of extensive knowledge and abilities in his art; having been not only a successful composer for the church, the theatre, and the chamber, but also an excellent performer on the violin.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

July 26th, 1813.

CORELLI.

WE are now arrived at a memorable æra for the *violin*, *tenor*, and *violoncello*, when the works and performance of the admirable ARGANGELO CORELLI rendered them respectable, and fixed their use and reputation, in all probability, as long as the

present system of music shall continue to delight the ears of mankind.

This most excellent master had the singular happiness of enjoying part of his fame during his life; for almost every contemporary musical writer, historian, or poet, united their friendly beams in casting additional lustre on his genius and performance: and his productions have contributed longer to charm the lovers of music by the mere powers of the bow, without the assistance of the human voice, than those of any composer that has yet existed.

HAYDN and MOZART, each, it must be confessed, endowed with more varied abilities, and a more creative genius, when instruments of all kinds are more perfect, and better understood, have captivated the musical world in a much higher degree. But whether the *duration* of their present justly merited reputation will be equal to that of Corelli, who reigned supreme in all concerts, and excited undiminished rapture during at least half a century, must be left to the decision of time, and the increased and daily increasing rage of depraved appetites for novelty.

Corelli was born at Fusignano, near Imola, in the territory of Bologna, in February, 1653. He is said, by Adami, to have received his first instructions in counterpoint from Matteo Simonelli, of the

Papal Chapel : his violin master, as we have already observed, was Giambatista Bassani, of Bologna. It has been said, without authority, that Corelli went to Paris in the year 1672, but was soon driven thence by the jealousy and violence of Lulli. That he visited Germany, after he had finished his studies, we are assured by Gaspar Printz, who informs us, that he was in the service of the Duke of Bavaria in 1680. Soon after this period he returned to Italy, and settled at Rome, where, about 1688, he published his first *twelve sonatas*. In 1685 the second set appeared, under the title of *Balletti da Camera*, which gave rise to the controversy between the author and Paolo Colonna, concerning the diatonic succession of fifths, between the first treble and the bass, of the allemande in the second sonata. In 1690, Corelli published the third opera of his sonatas; and in 1694 the fourth, which, consisting of movements fit for *dancing*, like the second, he called *Balletti da Camera*.

About this time, the opera was in a very flourishing state at Rome, and Corelli led the band, as principal violin:

His solos, the work by which he acquired the greatest reputation during his lifetime, did not appear till the year 1700, when they were published at Rome under the following title: "*Sonate à Vio-*

“ lino, è Violone, è Cembalo, Opera quinta, parte
 “ prima, parte seconda, Preludii, Allemande, Cor-
 “ rente, Gighe, Sarabande, Gavotte, è Follia.”

This work was dedicated to Sophia Charlotte, Electress of Brandenburg. Corelli's great patron at Rome was Cardinal Ottoboni, the great encourager of learning and the polite arts: to whom, in 1694, he dedicated his *Opera quinta*; and in whose palace he constantly resided “ *col spetiosa carattere d'attuale* “ *Servitore*” of his eminence, as he expresses himself in the Dedication.

Crescimbeni, speaking of the splendid and majestic *Academie*, or concert, held at Cardinal Ottoboni's, every Monday evening, says, that the performance was regulated by Arcangelo Corelli, that most celebrated professor of the violin—“ *famosissimo professore di violino.*”

The following anecdotes of this eminent musician were communicated by GEMINIANI, one of his most illustrious pupils, and who was himself an eye and an ear witness of what he thus related.

At the time when Corelli enjoyed the highest reputation, his fame, having reached the court of Naples, excited a curiosity in the king to hear his performance: he was consequently invited, by order of his majesty, to that capital.

Corelli, with great reluctance, was at length pre-

vailed upon to accept the invitation; but, lest he should not be well accompanied, he took with him his own second violin and violoncello. At Naples he found Alessandro Scarlatti, and several other masters.* He was entreated to play some of his concertos before the king: this he for some time declined, on account of his whole band not being with him, and there was no time, he said, for a rehearsal. At length, however, he consented; and, in great fear, performed the first of his concertos. His astonishment was very great to find, that the Neapolitan musicians executed his productions almost as accurately at sight, as his own band, after repeated rehearsals, when they had almost got them by heart. “*Si suona* (says he to Matteo, his second “violin) *à Napoli!*”

After this, being again admitted into his Majesty's presence, and desired to perform one of his sonatas, the king found an Adagio so long and dry, that being

* This must have happened about the year 1708, as it appears that Scarlatti was settled at Rome from 1709 to the time of his decease. Corelli's concertos appear to have been composed many years before they were published.

tired, he quitted the room, to the great mortification of Corelli.

Afterwards, he was desired to lead in the performance of a masque, composed by Scarlatti, which was to be represented before the king: this he undertook; but from Scarlatti's little knowledge of the violin, Corelli's part was somewhat awkward and difficult—in one place it went up to *F*, and when they came to that passage, Corelli failed, and could not execute it: but he was astonished beyond measure to hear Petrillo, the Neapolitan leader, and the other violins, perform with ease that which had baffled his utmost skill. A song succeeded this in *C* minor, which Corelli led off in *C* major. "*Re-commenciamo*,"—(let us begin again) said Scarlatti, good-naturedly. Still Corelli persisted in the major key, till Scarlatti was obliged to call out to him, and set him right. So mortified was poor Corelli with this disgrace, and the deplorable figure he imagined that he had made at Naples, that he stole back to Rome in silence. Soon after this, a hautboy player, whose name Geminiani could not recollect, acquired such applause at Rome, that Corelli, disgusted, would never again play in public. All these mortifications, joined to the success of Valentini, whose concertos and performance, though

infinitely inferior to those of Corelli, were become fashionable, threw him into such a state of melancholy and chagrin, as was thought to have hastened his death.

This account of Corelli's journey to Naples, is not a mere personal anecdote. It throws light upon the comparative state of music at Naples and at Rome in Corelli's time, and exhibits a curious contrast between the fiery genius of the Neapolitans, and the meek, timid, and gentle character of Corelli, so analogous to the style of his music.

In 1712, his concertos were beautifully engraved at Amsterdam, by Estienne Roger, and Michael Charles le Cene, and dedicated to John William, Prince Palatine of the Rhine; but, alas! the author survived the publication of this admirable work but six weeks; the dedication bearing date at Rome the 3d of December 1712, and he died on the 18th of January 1713!

He was buried in the church of Santa Maria della Rotonda (the ancient Pantheon), in the first chapel on the left hand of the entrance of that beautiful temple, where a monument, decorated with a marble bust, is erected to his memory, near that of the greatest of painters, Raffaele, by Philip William, Count Palatine of the Rhine, under the di-

rection of Cardinal Ottoboni, on which is the following inscription.

D. O. M.

Archangelio Corellio a Fusignano
Philippi Willelmi Comitis Palatini Rhemi

S. R. I. Principis de Electoris
Beneficentia

Marchioni de Ladensburg

Quod eximiis animi dotibus

Et incomparabili in musicis modulis peritie

Summis Pontificibus Apprimi carus

Italiæ, atq. exteris Nationibus admirationi fuerit

Indulgente Clemente XI. P. O. M.

Petrus Cardinalis Ottobonus S. R. E. Vic. Cam.

Et Galliarum Protector

Lyristæ celeberrimo

Inter familiares suos jam diu adscito

Ejus nomen Immortalitati commendatus

M. P. C.

Vixit Annos LIX. Mens. X. Dies XX.

Obiit IV. Id. Januarii Anno. Sal. MDCCXIII.

During many years after Corelli's decease, a solemn service, consisting of selections from his own works, was performed in the Pantheon by a numerous band, on the anniversary of his funeral. This

solemnity continued as long as any of his immediate scholars survived, to conduct the performance.

Of the private life, and moral character of this celebrated musician, no new information can now be obtained; but if we may judge of his equanimity and natural disposition, by the mildness, sweetness, and even tenor of his musical ideas, his temper and talents must have equally endeared him to all his acquaintance.

The account that is given of his having amassed six thousand pounds, exclusive of a valuable collection of pictures, and of his having bequeathed the whole of his property to his patron, Cardinal Ottoboni, savours more of vanity than true generosity; and the Cardinal magnanimously evinced his own opinion of this bequest, by reserving only the pictures, and distributing the remainder of Corelli's effects among his indigent relations, to whom they naturally appertained.

In regard to the peculiar merits of Corelli's productions, it may be briefly said, that his *Solos*, as a classical book for forming the hand of a young practitioner on the violin, have ever been regarded as a truly valuable work, by the most eminent masters of that instrument; and it is said, that his *Opera quinta*, on which all good schools for the violin have since been founded, cost him three years to revise and

correct. Tartini formed all his scholars on these solos; and Giardini observed, that of any two pupils of equal age and abilities, if the one were to begin his studies by Corelli, and the other by Geminiani, or any other eminent master whatever, he was certain that the first would become the best performer.

The *concertos* of Corelli appear to have withstood all the attacks of time and fashion, with more firmness than any of his other works. The harmony is so pure, the parts are so clearly, judiciously, and ingeniously disposed; and the effect of the whole from a large band, so majestic, solemn, and sublime, that they preclude all criticism, and make us forget that there is any other music of the same kind existing.

Geminiani's character of Corelli, upon the whole, seems very just: "His merit was not depth of learning like that of his contemporary, Alessandro Scarlatti; nor great fancy, or a rich invention in melody or harmony; but a nice ear, and most delicate taste, which led him to select the most pleasing melodies and harmonies, and to construct the part so as to produce the most delightful effect upon the ear." At the time of Corelli's greatest reputation, Geminiani asked Scarlatti what he thought of him; who answered, that "he found nothing greatly to admire in his composition, but was extremely

“ struck with the manner in which he played his
“ concertos, and his nice management of his band,
“ the uncommon accuracy of whose performance
“ gave the concertos an amazing effect, even to the
“ eye, as well as to the ear; for,” continued Geminiani, “ Corelli regarded it as essential to a band,
“ that their bows should all move exactly together,
“ all up, or all down; so that at his rehearsal,
“ which constantly preceded every public performance of his concertos, he would immediately stop
“ the band, if he saw an irregular bow.”

There was little or no melody in instrumental music before Corelli's time; and though he has more grace and elegance in his *Cantilena* than his predecessors; and though slow and solemn movements abound in his works, yet must they be confessed destitute of true pathetic and impassioned melody. However, when we recollect that some of his productions are upwards of one hundred and twenty years old, we shall, in spite of this deficiency, admire and wonder at their grace and elegance, which can only be accounted for on the principle of their ease and simplicity, which have conferred longevity on the works of Corelli. His productions continued longer in unfading favour in England, where they still retain a considerable portion of esteem, than

even in his own country, or indeed in any other part of Europe.

They have, however, been compelled to submit to the superior genius and talents of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Cherubini, who, in the idea of the generality of our musical readers, will probably, and perhaps justly, be considered to have left at an immeasurable distance, the comparatively humble efforts of their laborious predecessors.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

July 29, 1813.

PROGRESS OF THE VIOLIN, DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

AFTER the publication of Corelli's works, the violin increased in favour throughout Europe. There was scarcely a town in Italy, about the beginning of the last century, where some distinguished performer on that instrument did not reside.

The most popular of these was DON ANTONIO VIVALDI, Maestro di Capella of the Conservatorio

della Pietà, at Venice, " His *Cuckoo Concerto*," says Dr. Burney, " during my youth, was the wonder and delight of all frequenters of country concerts; and *Woodcock*, one of the Hereford Waits, " was sent for far and near to perform it." If acute and rapid tones be evils, Vivaldi has much of the sin to answer for. His title of *Don* was derived from his clerical character. " It is very usual," says Mr. Wright, in his Travels through Italy from 1720 to 1722, " to see priests play in the orchestras. The " famous Vivaldi, whom they call *Prete Rosso*, very " well known among us for his concertos, was a " topping man among them at Venice."

It was the Roman school, however, formed by Corelli, which produced the greatest composers and performers on the violin which Italy could boast, during the first fifty years of the last century.

GEMINIANI, one of the most distinguished of his scholars, having arrived here in 1714, the year after Corelli's death, and spent the chief part of his subsequent life in this kingdom, shall be more particularly noticed in that part of our work, in which the musical transactions of our own country are recorded.

LORENZO SOMIS, Maestro di Capella to the King of Sardinia, was regarded in Italy as of Co-

relli's school, a little modernized after the model of Vivaldi.

He was reputed one of the greatest masters of his instrument of his time; but his chief professional honour is the having formed among his scholars such a performer as GIARDINI.

We are now arrived at the admirable GUISEPPE TARTINI, who was so ambitious of being thought a follower of Corelli's precepts and principles, that during the zenith of his own reputation, he refused to teach any other music to his pupils, till they had studied the *Opera Quarta*, or *Solos* of Corelli. PASQUALINO BINI, one of his favourite scholars, by those means became nearly as good a player as himself. The style of Tartini, in executing an adagio, has been represented by his contemporaries as inimitable, and was almost, in their idea, supernatural. He formed the greatest school that the musical world had then known. His favourite pupils were BINI and Nardini; who, in their turn, formed scholars of great abilities, who contributed to spread his reputation, and manner of playing, all over Europe.

FERRARI, of Cremona, was also the immediate disciple of Tartini, but afterwards established a style of his own.

Tartini's first master was an obscure musician of

the name of Giulio di Terpi, who afterwards changed places with Tartini, and became his scholar. This circumstance Mr. Wiseman had from Tartini himself, who used to say, that he had studied very little till after he was thirty years of age.

Tartini changed his style in 1744, from extreme difficulty to grace and expression. Bini, above-mentioned, was recommended to him at the age of fifteen, by Cardinal Olivieri.

Tartini, finding him not only a youth of a happy disposition for music, but also of excellent morals, had a very great affection for him. This young musician practised with such assiduity, that in three or four years he vanquished the most difficult of Tartini's compositions, and executed them with greater force than the author himself.

When he had finished his studies, his patron, Cardinal Olivieri, took him to Rome, where he astonished all the professors by his performance, particularly MONTAGNARI, at that time the principal performer on the violin in that city; and it was generally believed, that Montagnari was so mortified by the superiority, as to have died of grief!

BINI having been informed that Tartini had changed his style and taste in playing, returned to Padua, where he placed himself for another year under that excellent and worthy master; at the end

of which period, so intense had been his application, that he played with a degree of certainty and expression truly wonderful.

It was after his return to Rome, that Tartini recommended Mr. Wiseman to him as a scholar, in the precise following words, which will serve as a specimen of this great master's modest and ingenuous disposition: "*Io lo mando a un mio scolare che suona più di me, e me ne glorio, per essere un angelo di costume, e religioso.*"—"I recommend him (Mr. Wiseman) to a scholar of mine, who plays better than myself; and I am proud of it, as he is an angel in religion and morals." A character, which Mr. Wiseman assured Dr. Burney, was strictly conformable to truth.

GIUSEPPE TARTINI was born at Pirano, in the province of Istria, in April, 1692. His father, having been a great benefactor to the cathedral church at Parenza, had been ennobled in reward for his piety. Guiseppe was originally intended for the law, but mixing music with his other studies, during the course of his education, it soon tyrannised over the whole circle of sister sciences. This is not so surprising as another strong propensity, which during his youth greatly occupied his attention.

This was *fencing*, an art not likely to become necessary to the safety or honour of a man of so

pious and pacific a disposition, engaged in a civil employment; and yet he is said, even in this art, to have equalled the master from whom he received instructions. In 1710, he was sent to the University of Padua, to pursue his studies as a civilian; but before he was twenty, having married without the consent of his parents, they wholly abandoned him, and obliged him to wander about in search of an asylum; which, after many hardships, he found in a convent at Assisi, where he was received by a monk, his relation, who, commiserating his misfortunes, let him remain there till something better could be done for him. Here he practised the violin to keep off melancholy reflections; but being discovered on a great festival, in the orchestra of the convent, by the accident of a remarkably high wind, which forcing open the doors of the church, blew aside the curtain of the orchestra, and exposed all the performers to the sight of the congregation; being thus recognised by a Paduan acquaintance, differences were accommodated, and he settled with his wife for some time at Venice. This lady was of the true Xantippe breed; but, as fortunately, poor Tartini was very Socratic in wisdom, virtue, and patience, her reign was unmolested by any domestic war, or useless opposition to her supremacy.

During his residence at Venice, the celebrated

Veracini arrived in that city : his performance awakened an extraordinary emulation in Tartini, who, though he was acknowledged to have a powerful hand, had never heard a great player before, or conceived it possible for the bow to possess such varied powers of energy and expression.

He therefore quitted Venice the next day, and proceeded to Ancona, in order to study the use of the bow in greater tranquillity, and with more convenience, than at Venice, as he had a place assigned him in the opera orchestra of that city. This happened in 1714, the year in which he discovered the phenomenon of the *third sound*.* Here too, during the carnival of the same year, he heard and perceived the extraordinary effects of a piece of simple recitative, which he mentions in his *Trattato di Musica*. It was likewise during his residence at Ancona, that by diligence and practice he acquired reputation sufficient, to entitle him in 1721, to an invitation to the distinguished place of first violin, and master of the band, to the celebrated church of

* This phenomenon, which has not yet been accounted for, consists in the united sounds of two notes ; as for example, G and E comprehending the sound of C, or the fifth below.

St. Anthony of Padua. By this time, his fame was so far extended, that he had repeated offers from Paris and London, to visit those capitals; but by a singular species of devotion and attachment to his patron saint, to whom he consecrated himself and his instrument, he constantly declined entering into any other service.

By the year 1728, he had made many excellent scholars, and established a system of practice for students on the violin, that was celebrated all over Europe, and which increased in reputation to the end of his life. What has already been observed in regard to the superiority of modern compositions for the violin, over those of Corelli, in point of spirit and fire, applies equally to Tartini; who, as we have seen, took Corelli for his model. This admirable musician, and worthy man, died on the 26th of February, 1770, to the infinite regret of the inhabitants of Padua, where he had resided nearly fifty years, and was not only regarded as its most attractive ornament, but as a philosopher and a saint.*

* Most of our readers have probably heard of "THE DEVIL'S SONATA." Monsieur de la Lande informs us, that he had from Tartini's own mouth the following singular anecdote, which shews to what a degree his

FRANCESCO MARIA VERACINI, and his contemporary, Tartini, were regarded in their day, as

imagination was inflamed by the genius of composition. “ He dreamed one night in 1713, that he had made a compact with the devil, who promised to be at his service on all occasions ; and during this vision, every thing succeeded according to his mind : his wishes were prevented, and his desires always surpassed by the assistance of his new servant. In short, he imagined that he presented the devil his violin, in order to discover what kind of a musician he was ; when, to his great astonishment, he heard him play a solo so singularly beautiful, which he executed with such superior taste and precision, that it surpassed all the music which he had ever heard or conceived in his life. So great was his surprise, and so exquisite his delight, upon this occasion, that it deprived him of the power of breathing. He awoke with the violence of his sensations, and instantly seized his fiddle, in hopes of expressing what he had just heard, but in vain. He, however, then composed a piece, which is, perhaps, the best of all his works, and called it the *Devil's Sonata* ; but it was so inferior to what his sleep had produced, that he declared he would have broken his instrument, and abandoned music for ever, if he could have subsisted by any other means.”

the greatest masters of that instrument that had ever appeared. Their abilities were not confined to the mere excellence of their performance, but extended equally to composition, in which they both manifested great genius and science. But whatever resemblance there may have been in the professional skill of these two masters, it was impossible for any two men to be more dissimilar in disposition. Tartini was so humble and timid, that he was never happy but in obscurity; while Veracini was in an equal degree vain-glorious.

Being at Lucca, at the time of *La festa della Croce*, which is celebrated every year on the 14th of September, when it is customary for the principal professors of Italy, vocal and instrumental, to meet, Veracini put down his name for a solo concerto; but when he entered the choir, in order to take possession of the principal place, he found it already occupied by Padre Girolamo Laurenti, of Bologna; who not knowing him, as he had been some years in Poland, asked him, where he was going? Veracini answered, to the place of first violin. Laurenti then told him, that he had been always engaged to fill that post himself; but that if he wished to play a concerto, either at vespers or during high mass, he should have a place assigned him. Veracini, with great contempt and indignation, turned his

back on him, and went to the lowest place in the orchestra. In that part of the service, in which Laurenti performed his concerto, he did not play a note, but listened with great attention; and being called upon, would not play a concerto, but requested the old father would permit him to play a solo at the bottom of the choir, desiring Lanzelli, the violoncellist of Turin, to accompany him; when he played in such a manner, as to extort an "e viva!" in the public church.

And whenever he was about to make a close, he turned to Laurenti, and called out, "*Così si suona per fare il primo violino*"—"this is the way to play the first fiddle." Many silly stories of a similar description, are handed about Italy concerning the arrogance of this performer, who was usually complimented with the title of *Capo pazzo*.

Veracini would instruct no one, except a nephew who died young. The only master he had himself in his youth, was Antonio Veracini of Florence; but by travelling all over Europe, he acquired a style of playing peculiar to himself. Besides being in the service of the King of Poland, he was a considerable time at different courts of Germany, and twice in England, where, during the time of Farinelli, he composed several operas. Burney mentions having himself heard him lead a band at a concert in

Hickford's room, in such a bold and masterly manner, as he had never before witnessed. Soon after this, Veracini was shipwrecked, and lost his two famous Steiner violins, esteemed the best in the world, and all his effects. In his usual light way, he used to call one of these instruments St. Peter, and the other St. Paul.

As a composer, he had certainly a great share of whim and caprice, but he built his freaks on a good foundation. The peculiarities in his performance were his bow-hand, his shake, his learned arpeggios, and a tone so loud and clear, that it could be distinctly heard through the most numerous band of a church or theatre.

Veracini and Vivaldi had the honour to be thought mad, for attempting in their works and performance, what many a sober gentleman has since done uncensured; but both these musicians happening to be gifted with more fancy and more execution than their neighbours, were considered insane, as Friar Bacon on account of his superior science was reputed a magician, and Galileo persecuted as a heretic.

BOCCHERINI, who was, according to Burney, still living at Madrid in 1787, and whose instrument was the violoncello, has perhaps supplied the per-

formers on bowed instruments, and lovers of music, with more excellent compositions than any master of the last century, anterior to HAYDN. His productions are at once bold, masterly, clear, and elegant. There are movements in his works in every style, and in the true genius of the instruments for which he wrote, that place him high in rank among the greatest masters, who have ever written for the violin and violoneello. We rarely meet with instrumental music more ingenious and pleasing than his quintetts, in which invention, grace, modulation, and good taste, conspire to render them, when well executed, a treat for the most refined hearers and critical judges of musical composition.

GIARDINI, having resided upwards of thirty years in England, a tribute to his great abilities will hereafter be given, in relating the musical transactions of our own country.

I am, &c.

LETTER XL.

July 30th, 1813.

PROGRESS OF MUSIC IN GERMANY, DURING THE
SEVENTENTH CENTURY.

CONSIDERABLE was the number of musicians who distinguished themselves throughout this extensive empire, during the seventeenth century.

The works of many of them are irrecoverably lost, and their talents forgotten, even by their countrymen: a dry list of their empty names would therefore be equally uninteresting and uninstruative to our readers.

The Lutheran, as well as the Roman Catholic religion, being alike favourable to ecclesiastical music, and the princes of Germany great patrons of every species of secular productions in the art, will very naturally account for the zeal and success, with which it has been cultivated and encouraged in that country; where, as music in almost all the common schools of every city, town, and village, forms a part of general education, every inhabitant of Ger-

many, gifted with genius, has an opportunity of displaying and improving it in very early youth.

The number, size, and excellence of the organs erected in the churches of Germany, have been productive of great diligence and emulation in the organists; and as the passion for learned and polyphonic music was not so early discountenanced by a partiality for simple melody, in the cultivation of the musical drama, in this country, as in Italy, the reign of harmony and fugue continued much longer uninterrupted. Mattheson has published a list of the most celebrated *organists* of Germany.—As their hard names would afford little entertainment to the generality of our readers, we beg leave to refer the more curious to the elaborate work of that celebrated antagonist of Handel.

Very early in the seventeenth century, *OPERAS* were occasionally performed at the courts of the German princes, both in their own language, and in Italian.

In 1627, the eminent Martin Opitz, whom the Germans call the father of their drama, translated the opera of *Dafne* from the Italian, which was set to music by the Chapel Master, Schütz, and performed theatrically at the court of Dresden, on occasion of the marriage of the Elector's sister, with the landgrave of Hesse, George the Second.

In 1635, *Judith*, an opera, by the same poet, was set and performed in the same manner. And in 1653, an Italian opera, written and set by Benedetto Ferrari, called *L'Inganno d'Amore*, was performed at Ratisbon.

The Emperor Leopold, passionately fond of Italian poetry and music, is said, by Quadrio, not only to have been the constant patron of both, but to have himself written and set to music, many beautiful canzonets and madrigals.

This prince, early in his reign, retained in his service the Italian lyric poet Minato, and the composer ANTONIO DRAGHI, to write and set operas for the imperial court at Vienna.

The first Italian opera performed at Munich, appears to have been, *Adelaide Regina Principessa di Sasa*, set by GIULIO RIVA, *Medico Veneziano*. But the first exhibited on a public stage was THEILE'S *Adam and Eve*, in 1678, at Hamburg, in the German language; and the second, *Orontes*, in the same year. The operas that were performed subsequent to this period, are recorded in Marpurgh's *Historical and Critical Essays on Musical Subjects*, and were very numerous. In 1694, Keiser, Brenner, and Krieger, began to compose for the Hamburg Theatre; and in 1696, the operas of the ad-

mirable Abbate Steffani, which he had set in Italian for the court of Hanover, began to be translated, and performed in the German language at Hamburg, with the exception of the AIRS, which were usually *sung in Italian*. This absurd custom prevailed in several parts of Germany, so late as the year 1733, when GRAUN set his opera of *Pharao*, the *Gian-guir* of Apostolo Zeno, for the theatre at Brunswick, of which only the recitatives were translated into German, while the airs were set and sung in the original language.

In the beginning of the last century, according to Riccoboni, in his General History of the Stage, the performers in the German operas at Hamburg were all tradesmen: your shoemaker was frequently the first performer on the stage; and you might have bought fruit and sweetmeats of the same girl, whom the night before you saw in the character of *Armida* or *Semiramis*.

This may, perhaps, have been literally true in the infancy of the musical drama in that town; and even later, some of the inferior characters may have been personated in the manner mentioned by Riccoboni: but afterwards, it is well known, that Mattheson was many years a performer in those operas; and the justly celebrated composer HASSE, before

he went to Italy, was a tenor singer on the Hamburg stage, in the operas of Keiser.*

The VIOLIN seems to have been in general use, and more cultivated in Germany, during the seventeenth century, than in any other part of Europe. This appears by the number of performers, who, according to Walther, have excelled, and the numerous pieces published for that instrument, which he has recorded in his Dictionary, where we frequently find *solos*, *sonatas*, and *concertos*, expressly composed for it, before such productions were thought of elsewhere.

The admirable KEISER lived till the year 1739. This great musician, the first master of HASSE, was born at Weissenfels, in 1673. He was educated at Leipsic, where he was entered of that University, and distinguished himself early in life. He began to cultivate music in that city, but was chiefly his own master, forming himself upon the Italian school, and studying the best productions of that country. His first attempt at composition was a

* This custom is not confined to Hamburg, or even to Germany. The writer of this note perfectly well remembers to have been present, in the Carnival of the year 1792, at a theatrical entertainment, extremely well performed, by the tradesmen of Loretto.

pastoral, called *Ismena*, for Wolfenbüttele. *Basilus*, his first opera for Hamburg, was performed in 1694, with very great applause: *Adonis* was the next, which gave equal satisfaction. But, according to Mattheson, whatever music he set to words on the subject of Love, was *peculiarly* excellent. *Circe* was his last opera, performed in 1734, and was the one hundred and eighteenth which this indefatigable artist had produced.

Exclusive of his dramatic works, he composed innumerable *divertimenti*, *serenate*, and *cantatas*. Fancy and originality were the characteristics of all his productions, as they have since been in most of the compositions of the immortal Haydn. In fact, the vigour of a fertile imagination, corrected by study and experience, is discernible in all the effusions of the inexhaustible Keiser.

There can be little doubt, that many other composers of the seventeenth century, whose works have perished, as far as harmony and diligence could carry them, were superior to all other musicians of the time. But during the last and present centuries, by a more frequent intercourse with Italy, and the best vocal performers of that country, together with the establishment of Italian operas in all the principal courts of Germany, the inhabitants of that vast empire have cultivated INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

to a degree of refinement and perfection, unattained during any former period in the history of the art; and have not only supplied their own country with innumerable excellent musicians, but have even furnished Italy, and every other part of Europe, with professors, whose genius and abilities have been the delight and admiration of all true judges of composition and performance.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLI.

July 31, 1813.

STATE OF MUSIC IN FRANCE, DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

MUSIC does not appear to have been much cultivated in this kingdom, till the operas of Lulli were honoured with the patronage of Louis the Fourteenth, and excited the attention of the public.

France had not sufficiently recovered from the horrors of a long and bloody, civil and religious war, to make much progress in the arts of peace during

the life of Henry the Fourth. The immediate successor, however, of this heroic and beneficent prince, Louis the Thirteenth, who began his reign in 1610, at only six years old, is said to have been not only a lover, and encourager of the art in riper years, but, with the assistance of Beauchamp, his first violin, to have composed several airs.

Pere Mersenne, Kircher, and other musical writers, have given, as a specimen of his invention, an air for a grand dance in 1618, before he was fifteen years of age.

Les Vingt Quatre Violons du Roi subsisted in Henry the Fourth's reign, but these were only used in dancing. The lute was more an instrument of parade in those times than any other; and in 1609, Mary de Medicis, Henry the Fourth's second queen, was followed in a grand dance by twelve lutes, led by Ballard, the principal lutenist of the court.

The most eminent composer for the church during the reign of Louis the Thirteenth, was ARTHUR AUX COUTEAUX; who, among various musical works in Latin and French, published Psalms, which he dedicated to that prince. The favourite secular court composer was JEAN BATIST BOESSET, the best lutenist, and the principal composer of songs of his time. Some of his "*Court Ayres, with their*

Ditties englished," were published in London by Fulmer in 1649, of which it is now difficult to find the measure or accent.

The favourite singing master in France, about the middle of the seventeenth century, was MICHEL LAMBERT, who had so many scholars, that he was obliged to teach a considerable number at a time, and at his own house, where he formed a kind of academy, and where he finished every lesson with singing to his own accompaniment several songs before a brilliant and enraptured audience.

MARCEL, the celebrated Parisian dancing-master, followed this example, dancing with his best scholars at the conclusion of the lessons which he gave at home on his public days. The renowned LULLI married the daughter of this musician, who was born in 1610, and died in 1696.

Though the French have long wished to have a characteristic dramatic music of their own, their most patriotic writers on the subject have been obliged to confess, that they are indebted to the Italians for the establishment of operas in France. Even the continuator of M. Bonnet's *Hist. de la Musique*, M. Freneuse, a furious champion in defence of Lulli, and French music of every description, allows that Rinuccini, who followed Mary of Medicis into France, had furnished the first idea of dramatic mu-

sic to the Parisians ; and that Cardinal Mazarine, during the minority of Louis the Fourteenth, had two operas, in Italian verse and to Italian music, performed by a company of Italian singers, for the avowed purpose of impressing the court of France with a favourable idea of the fashionable music of his country.

The first of these, performed at the Bourbon Palace in 1645, was a burlatta ; its title, *La festa teatrale della Finte passa*, written by Giulio Strozzi, but by whom set, does not appear. The second was *Orfeo, e Euridice*, in 1647. Besides these, at the nuptials of Louis the Fourteenth, in 1660, *Brucolo Amante*, a serious Italian opera, was performed in the same manner, and well received at court by the flatterers of the cardinal, says the above-mentioned continuator of Bonnet's History.

According to M. de Blainville, in his short History of Music, previous to the arrival of Lulli, PERLIN, master of the ceremonies to Gaston, Duke of Orleans, had even attempted to elevate the French language to the honour of being set to music. He began by short airs and recitatives for a single voice ; and afterwards composed dialogues, which Lambert or Cambert, a musician in the service of the Queen Mother, set to music. At length, in 1659, Perrin ventured to write a pastoral drama, which was set

and performed at Issy, in the house of Mons. de la Haye, and succeeded admirably.

The king being desirous of hearing this pastoral, it was performed before his Majesty and the Cardinal, at Vincennes, and was greatly applauded. Encouraged by their success, Perrin and Cambert associated, and having prevailed upon the Marquis de Sourdeac to join them, he not only contributed his knowledge in mechanics, and genius in the invention of machinery and decoration, but money likewise to support the expence of the undertaking.

This triumvirate produced three or four operas, each being confined to a particular department: to Perrin was assigned the poetry; to Cambert the composition of the music; and the machinery and decorations to the Marquis. *Ariane*, on the point of being performed, was stopped by the death of Cardinal Mazarine. However, in 1669, the king granted an exclusive privilege to Perrin for the establishment of operas, not only at Paris, but throughout the kingdom of France.

The opera of *Pomona*, set by Cambert, was long performed in the great hall of the Hôtel de Nevers; and in 1671, in the Tennis Court, called the Hôtel de Guénégaud, where it had a run of eight months.

Shortly afterwards, upon a difference between the Marquis de Sourdeac and Perrin, in 1672, the king

withdrew the patent granted to Perrin, and conferred the *Privilege des Academies de Musique* upon JOHN BAPTIST LULLI, who began his regency with the exhibition of his opera called *Les Fêtes de l'Amour, et de Bacchus*, at the Tennis Court de Be-lair. This opera was honoured in a singular manner, with the performance of the Duke of Monmouth, the Duc de Villeroi, the Marquis de Ras-ser, and M. le Grand, in a ballet, with four stage dancers, before the king. Lulli had already been so fortunate, as to meet and connect himself with the lyric poet QUINAULT, whose dramas for music were greatly superior to every similar production which had then appeared in any part of Europe.

JOHN BAPTIST LULLI, the son of a peasant in the neighbourhood of Florence, was born in 1688. He had a few instructions in music from a cordelier. His first instrument was the guitar, to which he was always fond of singing. The Chevalier de Guise brought him into France in 1646, as a present to his sister, Mademoiselle de Guise, who placed him among the assistants of her kitchen, where he was assigned the honourable office of *sous-marmiteon*, under-scellion.

In his leisure hours, being naturally fond of music, he used to be scraping upon a miserable violin, to the great annoyance of his fellow-servants. How-

ever, his disposition for music being thus discovered, his patroness permitted him to be instructed at her own expence by a regular master, under whom he made so rapid a progress, that he was soon admitted among the violins of the king's band; where he so greatly distinguished himself, that he was employed to compose the music for the court ballets, in which Louis the Fourteenth, at that time very young, was accustomed to dance. But though Lulli approached the royal presence early in life, it was by slow degrees that he arrived at solid preferment. In 1662, he was appointed superintendant, or master of the king's new band of violins, which, if we may judge by the business afterwards assigned them by Lulli in his operas, was composed of musicians not likely, by their abilities, to renovate the miraculous powers ascribed to Orpheus and Amphion.*

In this station Lulli was twenty years working his way to the opera regency and favour of the public,

* Ces nouveaux musiciens formés par Lulli, selon, M. Laborde devinrent bientôt les plus habiles de l'Europe; et ce n'est pas beaucoup dire: l'ignorance des musiciens de ce tems étant portée à un tel point, qu'ils ne pouvoient executer que ce qu'ils avoient appris par cœur.

before he composed operas, and had them performed under his own direction. After *Les Éléments d'Amour, et de Bacchus*, already mentioned, Lulli composed, in 1673, *Cadmus*; 1674, *Alceste*; 1675, *Thésée, et Le Carnaval*; 1676, *Atys*; 1677, *Isis*; 1678, *Psyché*; 1679, *Bellerophon*; 1680, *Proserpine*; 1681, *Le Triomphe de l'Amour*; 1682, *Perses*; 1683, *Phaéton*; 1684, *Amadis*; 1685, *Roland*; *L'Idyle de la Paix*, and *Le Temple de la Paix*; 1686, *Armide*; 1687, *Acis, et Galathée*. All these were written by Quinault, except *Psyché* and *Bellerophon*, both by CORNEILLE, and *Acis et Galathée*, by Campistra.*

Lulli, though coarse in his manners, and a bad courtier, was in such favour with Louis the Fourteenth, that he could not endure the music of any other composer. This magnificent prince not only granted him *lettres de noblesse*, but also conferred on him the charge of *secrétaire du roi*, and bestowed many other honours and favours on his family. That his compositions were profitable, is evident from the

* *Armide*, says Bonnet, tom. 3, page 104, was the favourite opera, of the ladies; *Atys*, of Louis the Fourteenth; *Phaéton*, of the public; and *Isis*, of the professors.

treasures found in his coffers after his decease, amounting to 130,000 livres in gold, an extraordinary sum in those days.

Though externally rough and unpolished in his manners, Lulli was a man of integrity, and absolutely free from malevolence. His greatest defects were the love of wine and money. He had the address to make himself beloved, as well as feared, by his performers, an art absolutely necessary for the manager of an opera, which can only subsist by a proper exercise of authority. The superiority of Lulli's talents gave him that ascendancy over his dependents which confirmed his dominion. For however difficult it may be to govern capricious and enthusiastic subjects, real merit, exact justice, and good treatment, will never fail to preserve order and obedience.

Lulli, as we have before had occasion to observe, married the daughter of Lambert, the celebrated singing master, who lived till the year 1720.

Lulli's death was the consequence of an accident. Having composed a *Te Deum* for the King's recovery from a dangerous illness, 1687, during the performance at the church of the Feuillans, in the animation of beating time, by striking his foot instead of the floor with his cane, he occasioned a contusion, that from a bad habit of body brought on a mortification, which was soon pronounced incurable. Every

expedient that was tried to stop the progress of the malady being ineffectual, he was made acquainted with his situation. His confessor refusing to give him absolution, unless he would burn the opera of *Achille et Polixene*, which he was composing for the stage; he consented, and this new music was committed to the flames. A few days after, being a little better, one of the young princes of Vendôme went to see him. "Why, Baptiste," said he, "have you been such a fool as to burn your new opera, to humour a gloomy priest?" "Hush! hush!" replied Lulli, "I have another copy of it." However, a few days after, he was not only obliged to submit to the will of his confessor, but of death himself, who terminated his existence on the 22d of March, 1687, at fifty-four years of age.

The recitative of Lulli's operas, is offensive to all ears, but those of the French nation; but his airs, choruses, and dances, are so easy and natural, that it is hardly possible for a lover of music, gifted with a voice and disposition for singing, to hear them frequently performed without remembering them. And this accounts for the usual custom, in those days, for the audience in the parterre, or pit, of a French opera house, to join with the performers in the choruses.

Mons. Laborde, in his *Essai sur la Musique*, has

given an account of the principal original singers in Lulli's operas. Their abilities do not appear very stupendous; and many of them were brought from remote provinces of the kingdom, before they had any knowledge of music, and were instructed in their parts by Lulli himself, and by his father-in-law, Lambert, merely by ear. But Lulli not only taught his vocal performers to sing, but also to act; and sometimes gave instructions even to the dancers. The celebrated LA ROCHOIS had no other master in singing or acting than Lulli.

DUMENI, whose voice was a counter-tenor, and who performed the principal men's parts, had been cook to M. de Foucoult, and was utterly ignorant of music when he first appeared on the stage.

LA MAUPIN, the successor of La Rochois, was the most extraordinary personage of all this Syren troop. She fought like a man, and resisted and fell like a woman. Her adventures are of a very romantic description.

Married to a young husband, who was soon compelled to absent himself from her, to enter on an office he had obtained in Provence, she ran away with a fencing-master, of whom she learned the use of the small sword, and became an excellent fencer, which was afterwards serviceable to her on several occasions. The lovers first retreated to Marseilles,

where necessity constrained them to solicit employment at the opera ; and as both had by nature good voices, they were received without difficulty. She afterwards went to Paris, and made her first appearance on the opera stage, in 1695, where she performed the part of Pallas, in *Oedipus*, with the greatest success. The applause was so violent, that she was obliged to take off her masque, to salute and thank the public, which redoubled their marks of approbation. From that time her success was uninterrupted.

Dumeni, the singer, having affronted her, she put on men's clothes, waited for him in the *Place des Victoires*, and insisted on his drawing his sword, and fighting her ; which he refusing, she caned him, and took from him his watch and snuff-box. Next day, Dumeni having boasted at the opera-house, that he had defended himself against three men, who attempted to rob him, she related the whole story, and produced his watch and snuff-box in proof of her having caned him for his cowardice. Theventard, another singer, was nearly treated in the same manner, and had no other way of escaping chastisement, than by publicly asking her pardon, after having concealed himself three weeks in the *Palais Royal*. At a ball given by Monsieur, the brother of Louis the Fourteenth, she again dressed herself in men's clothes,

and having behaved impertinently to a lady, three of her friends, supposing La Maupin to be a man, called her out. She might easily have avoided the combat, by discovering her sex, but on the contrary, she instantly drew and killed them all three. Afterwards, returning very coolly to the ball, she related the story to Monsieur, who obtained her pardon. After various other adventures, she went to Brussels, and there became the mistress of the Elector of Bavaria. This Prince quitting her for the Countess of Arcos, sent her by the Count, husband of that lady, a purse of 40,000 livres, with an order to quit Brussels. This extraordinary heroine, threw the purse at the Count's head, telling him, it was a recompence worthy of such a scoundrel as himself.

After this, she returned to the opera stage, which she quitted in 1705. Being at length seized with a fit of devotion, she recalled her husband, who had remained in Provence, and passed with him the last years of her life, in a very pious manner, dying in 1707, at the age of thirty-four.

The music of Lulli, with which the French nation was so long delighted, has now but few adherents. We shall conclude this letter with the following observations of Voltaire, who, having lived long out of France, and thus having constant oppor-

ties of hearing the unbiassed opinions of the rest of Europe, in regard to the music of his country, is more fair and reasonable in speaking of it, than most other writers on the subject.

“ French music,” says he, “ at least the vocal, “ is not pleasing to any other nation, on account of “ the peculiarity of our prosody. We always lay a “ stress on the last syllable, while other nations lean “ on the penultima, or antepenultima, like the Italians. Ours is the only language which has words “ terminated by *e* mute; and this *e* which is not pronounced in common conversation, has a note assigned it in musical declamation. And this it is “ that renders most of our airs and recitatives insupportable to all who are not accustomed to them. “ Besides this, the slowness of our melody, which “ is a strange contrast to our national vivacity, will “ always render the music of France fit only for its “ own inhabitants.

“ Our instrumental music, also, though less offensive to strangers, is in some degree affected by “ the monotony and languor of the vocal; but many “ of our movements for instruments, especially our “ airs for dancing, have been much used and admired “ in other countries.

“ It is worth remarking, that when Lulli, the “ father of true French music, came into France,

“ the dramatic music of Italy was of the same grave,
 “ noble, and simple kind, as that which we still
 “ admire in the recitatives of Lulli. And nothing
 “ can more resemble those recitatives, than Luigi’s
 “ famous motet, composed and universally admired
 “ in Italy, about the same time: *sunt breves mundi*
 “ *rosæ.*

“ However, the poetry of Quinault animated the
 “ music, more than the music of Lulli animated the
 “ words. The genius of two such men, united with
 “ great acting, were necessary to form such an ex-
 “ hibition in some parts of *Atys*, *Armide*, and *Ro-*
 “ *land*, as neither antiquity, nor any contemporary
 “ people ever knew.

“ The airs are not equal to the recitatives of these
 “ great scenes. They are short, simple tunes, more
 “ in the style of our noëls, or Christmas carols, and
 “ Venetian ballads, than opera songs. But such was
 “ the taste of the times. And the more artless the
 “ music, the easier it was retained.

“ After Lulli, COLASSE, CAMPRA, DESTOUCHES,
 “ and other musicians, have only been his imitators,
 “ till the time of RAMEAU, a man who surpassed
 “ them all in science, and whose theoretical writings
 “ have made music a new art.

“ With respect to our ecclesiastical composers,
 “ though many of them have been celebrated in

" France, their works have not yet penetrated into
 " other countries."

These opinions of this eminent writer concerning
 the music of France, will have the more weight, as he
 was seldom unmindful of the honour of his country.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLII.

August 2, 1816.

PROGRESS OF CHURCH MUSIC IN ENGLAND, SINCE THE DEATH OF PURCELL.

THE principal composers for the church, subse-
 quent to the death of Purcell, who have not been
 already mentioned, were Jeremiah Clarke, Dr. Hol-
 den, Dr. Creighton, William Tucker, and Dr.
 Aldrich, with Goldwin, Dr. Croft, Weldon, Doc-
 tors Greene, Boyce, and Nares.

JEREMIAH CLARKE received his education in
 the Chapel Royal, under Dr. Blow, who seems to
 have had a paternal affection for him. In 1698, he

resigned in his favour the place of master of the children, and Almoner of St. Paul's, of which cathedral Clarke was likewise soon after appointed organist. In 1700, Dr. Blow and his pupil were appointed Gentlemen Extraordinary in the King's Chapel, of which also, in 1704, on the death of Mr. Francis Piggott, they were jointly admitted to the place of organist.

The compositions of Clarke are not numerous, as an untimely and melancholy end was put to his existence, before his genius had been allowed time to expand.

Early in life he was so unfortunate as to conceive a violent and hopeless passion for a very beautiful lady, of a rank far superior to his own; and his sufferings under these circumstances, became at length so intolerable, that he resolved to terminate them by suicide. The late Mr. Samuel Wiely, one of the Lay Vicars of St. Paul's, who was very intimate with him, related the following extraordinary story, which he had from his unhappy friend. "Being at the house of an acquaintance in the country, he found himself so miserable, that he suddenly determined to return to London. His friend observing in his behaviour evident marks of dejection, furnished him with a horse, and a servant to attend him. In his way to town, a fit of melancholy and

“ despair having seized him, he alighted, and giving
 “ his horse to the servant, went into a field, in the
 “ corner of which there was a pond surrounded with
 “ trees, which pointed out to his choice two ways
 “ of getting rid of life; but not being particularly
 “ inclined to one more than the other, he left it to
 “ the determination of chance; and taking a piece
 “ of money out of his pocket, and tossing it in the
 “ air, determined to abide by its decision; but the
 “ money falling on its edge in the clay, seemed to
 “ prohibit both these modes of destruction. His
 “ mind, however, was too much disordered to re-
 “ ceive comfort, or take advantage of this delay;
 “ he therefore remounted his horse, and rode to Lon-
 “ don, determined to find some other means of ter-
 “ minating his existence.

“ Not many weeks after his return, in July, 1707,
 “ he shot himself in his own house, in St. Paul’s
 “ Church-yard. The late Mr. John Reading, orga-
 “ nist of St. Dunstan’s Church, a scholar of Dr.
 “ Blow, and master of Mr. Stanley, who was in-
 “ timately acquainted with Clarke, happening to
 “ pass the door at the instant the pistol went off,
 “ upon entering the house, found his friend and
 “ fellow-student in the agonies of death.”

The anthems of this pathetic composer, which
 are printed by Dr. Boyce, are not only more natural

and pleasing than those of his master, Dr. Blow, but wholly free from licentious harmony, and breach of rule. He is mild, placid, and apparently incapable of violence of any kind. In his first anthem, (vol. 2.) the subject of which required cheerfulness, he does not appear in his true character, which is tender and plaintive. His full anthem, "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem!" is extremely natural and agreeable, and as modern and graceful, as the gravity of the choral service will with propriety allow. And in his verse anthem, the movements in triple time are as pathetic, and even elegant, as any music of the same period, ecclesiastical or secular, which was produced either at home or on the continent. Tenderness is so much his characteristic, that he may be justly called the musical Otway of his time.

WILLIAM HOLDEN, Doctor of Divinity, Canon of Ely, Residentiary of St. Paul's, and Sub-dean of the Chapel Royal, not only merits particular notice as an able and learned writer on the theory of music, but as an ecclesiastical composer of anthems, three or four of which are preserved in Dr. Tudway's Collection in the British Museum.

From the regularity and unembarrassed arrangement in several parts of these specimens of his composition, it is easy to discover, that he had not stu-

died, and practised counterpoint in the superficial manner of an idle dilettante, but with the application of a diligent professor.

Besides his deep knowledge in music, and eminence as a divine, he also distinguished himself as a philosopher, a mathematician, and a philologist. He was one of the first Fellows of the Royal Society; and in treating several curious subjects, nice selection and application of words, prove him to have been a consummate master of the English language. Indeed, the strength, precision, clearness, and compression of his style, has been hardly ever equalled by any writer on philosophical subjects in our country, particularly in his admirable *Treatise on the Elements of Speech*, published in 1669, and drawn up with the benevolent design of giving relief to a person who was deaf and dumb. In this essay he has analysed, dissected, and classed the letters of our alphabet so minutely and clearly, that it is well worthy the attention of lyric poets, and composers of vocal music; to whom it will point out such harsh and untuneable combinations of letters and syllables, as, from their difficult utterance, impede and corrupt the voice in its passage.

Among other works, Dr. Holden published, in 1694, a *Discourse concerning Time*, in which the deficiency of the Julian calendar was explained, and

the method of reforming it demonstrated, which was afterwards adopted in the *change of style*. Dr. Holden died in 1696, aged eighty-two, and was buried in the subterraneous chapel of St. Paul's, where a marble monument is erected to his memory, with an inscription, reciting his titles, talents, and extensive knowledge.

ROBERT CREUGHTON, D. D. one of the gentlemen of Charles the Second's Chapel, and Precentor of the Cathedral at Wells, is justly entitled to a place among reverend dilettanti: for though he was not gifted with great original genius for musical composition, which he only studied as an amusement in his leisure hours; yet, he has left such pleasing and elegant specimens of his progress in the art, as sufficiently evince judgment, taste, and knowledge. This venerable divine attained the great age of ninety-seven, dying in 1736.

The Rev. WILLIAM FICKER, likewise one of the gentlemen of King Charles the Second's Chapel, and precentor of Westminster Abbey, was a very judicious composer of choral music. Mr. Mason, in speaking of the full anthem, "O give thanks unto the Lord," by this ingenious dilettante, very justly observes, that "every syllable in this composition has its just length, and each part

“ of a sentence its proper pause : it admits no perplexing alterations, or unmeaning repetitions, but proceeds in one full, yet distinct strain, harmonically, yet intelligibly.”

The Rev. Dr. HENRY ALDRICH, appointed Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, in 1689, was a singular instance of a musical dilettante vanquishing all those difficulties in composition, which generally require the study of an entire professional life to surmount.

At the same time that this extraordinary man was greatly distinguishing himself as a polemical writer, a polite scholar, a theologian, a profound critic, an architect, and displaying a sound judgment and exquisite taste in arts, sciences, and literature in general, he became so deeply skilled in the theory and practice of harmony, that his compositions, particularly those for the church, equal, in number and excellence, those of the greatest masters of his time.

Though not more than five or six of his choral productions continue to be performed, except at Oxford, yet he composed nearly forty services and anthems, which are preserved in the third volume of Dr. Tudway's Collection in the British Museum,

His full anthem, "Out of the Deep," inserted in Boyce's second volume, is an excellent composition, in the manner of our best old masters.

Besides these, Dr. Aldrich enriched our Protestant cathedrals, with many admirable compositions, by adapting English words from the Psalms or Liturgy, to anthems and motets of Tallis, Bird, Palestrina, Carissimi, Graziani, and Bassani, which were originally set to Latin words for the Roman Catholic Service. Among his compositions of a lighter kind, he amused himself with setting rounds and catches, of which eight or ten are inserted in the two books of the Catch Club, or Merry Companion.

The smoking catch, "*Good! Good! indeed!*" and the round, "*Hark the bonny Christ Church Bells,*" have been always admired; the first for humour and contrivance, the second for its pleasing melody and general effect.*

* Dr. Aldrich's excessive love of smoking was an entertaining topic of discourse in the university, concerning which, the following story, among others, passed current. A young student of Christ Church finding some difficulty in persuading one of his associates to believe that the Dean had so violent a propensity to this recreation, laid him a wager that he was smoking at that in-

The admirable choral discipline which he preserved in his college at Oxford for upwards of twenty years, is still remembered. Indeed, without neglecting more important concerns, he seems to have interested himself in the cultivation and prosperity of the art, with as much zeal and diligence as if his studies and pursuits had been confined to that alone. He not only had concerts and rehearsals at his apartments weekly, but even established a music-school in his college, wherein he both tried and rewarded genius and assiduity.

stant, about ten o'clock in the morning. Away therefore went the student to the Deanery, where, being admitted to the Dean in his study, he related the occasion of his visit; when the Dean replied in perfect good-humour, "You see you have lost your wager, for I am not smoking, but *filling* my pipe." The catch above-mentioned was composed to be sung by the Dean, Mr. Sampson Estwick, then of Christ-Church, and afterwards of St. Paul's, who is plainly pointed out by the words, "*I prithee, Sam, fill,*" and two other smoking friends. The three sides of the quadrangle of Christ-Church, called Peckwater, the elegant chapel of Trinity College, and the church of All Saints, in the High-Street, Oxford, were all designed by Dr. Aldrich, and sufficiently establish his character as an architect.

Music, perhaps, never flourished so much at Oxford, as under his example, guidance, and patronage. This worthy and most accomplished divine, at his decease in 1710, bequeathed his admirable and most complete collection of music to his college, where it is preserved with that care to which so extensive and unique an assortment of masses, motets, madrigals, and anthems of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is justly entitled.

JOHN GOLDWIN, or GOLDING, was a pupil of Dr. Child, and his successor in the chapel of St. George, at Windsor, in 1697. In 1703, he was appointed master of the choristers in the same chapel, and continued to occupy both these stations till his decease in 1719.

Nothing can be more just than the short character given of the productions of this master, by the late honest and candid judge, Dr. Boyce, who says, "There is in them a singularity of modulation which is uncommon and agreeable."

WILLIAM CROFT, educated in the Chapel Royal under Dr. Blow, was born, in 1677, at Nether-Eaton, in Warwickshire. His first preferment, after quitting the Chapel on the loss of his treble voice, was to the situation of organist of St. Anne's, Westminster, where an organ had been lately erected. In 1700, he was admitted a gentleman extra-

ordinary of the Chapel Royal; and in 1707, on the decease of Jeremiah Clarke, he was appointed joint organist with his master, Dr. Blow; upon whose death, in 1708, he not only obtained the whole place of organist, but was also appointed master of the children, and composer to the Chapel Royal, as well as to the situation of organist of Westminster Abbey.

All these appointments at so early a period of life, as he was now but thirty-one years of age, occasioned no diminution of diligence in the performance of his duty, or zeal in the study and cultivation of his art. He appears, indeed, to have proceeded through life in one even tenor of professional activity and prosperity of conduct. We hear of no illiberal traits of envy, malévolence, or insolence. He neither headed nor abetted fiddling factions, but quietly preserving the dignity of his station, without oppressing or mortifying his inferiors, the universal respect which he obtained from his talents and eminence in his profession, seems to have been blended with personal affection.

In the year 1711, he resigned his place of organist of St. Anne's, in favour of Mr. John Isham; and in the following year published anonymously, under the title of *DIVINE HARMONY*, a book, containing the words only of select anthems, used in the

Chapel Royal, Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, and other cathedrals, with a preface, containing a short account of our church music, and an encomium on Tallis and Bird.

In 1715, he was honoured with the degree of Doctor in Music, in the University of Oxford. His exercise for this degree, which was performed in the theatre on the 13th of July, by the gentlemen of the chapel, and other assistants from London, consisted of two odes, one in English, and one in Latin, written by Dr. Joseph Trapp. The music of both these odes was afterwards neatly engraved on copper, and published in score.

During the successful wars of Queen Anne, the frequent victories obtained by the Duke of Marlborough, occasioned Dr. Croft, as composer to her Majesty, to be frequently called upon to furnish hymns and anthems of thanksgiving. Several of these, and other occasional compositions for the church, are printed in his works, and are still performed in our cathedrals.

In 1724, Dr. Croft published by subscription, a splendid edition of his choral music, in two volumes, folio, under the title of "MUSICA SACRA, " or Select Anthems in Score, for two, three, four, " five, six, seven, and eight voices, to which is " added, the Burial Service, as it is occasionally

“performed in Westminster Abbey.” The neatness and accuracy with which this work was published, being the first of the kind that was stamped on pewter plates, and in score, rendered it more acceptable and useful to the purchasers; as, whatever choral compositions appeared anterior to this publication, had been printed with types, in single parts, and were extremely incorrect.

In the preface to this work, the author gives a summary account of our cathedral music, from the time of Tallis and Bird to his own. And here Dr. Croft, like his colleague Weldon, celebrates Mr. Elford, a counter-tenor of the Chapel Royal, for whom most of the solo anthems were expressly composed, “as a bright example of excellence in this kind of singing, surpassing, as far as is known, all that ever went before him; and fit to be imitated by all that come after him; particularly for his manner of giving due energy and emphasis to the *words* of his music.”

Mr. Richard Elford was educated in the choir of Lincoln, but his voice settling into a counter-tenor, he was invited to Durham Cathedral, where, however, he did not long remain, being advised to go up to London, to try his fortune on the stage. In 1706, his name appears in Downes, the Prompter's list of performers, in Durfey's opera of “*The*

"Wonders in the Sun, or the Kingdom of Birds."

But his person and action being clumsy and awkward, he quitted the theatre, and was admitted as Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, as well as to the places of Lay Vicar of St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey. He had likewise an addition of a hundred pounds a year made to his salary in the chapel, on account of the uncommon excellency of his voice.

Dr. Croft presided with great ability nearly twenty years, over the first choir in the kingdom; and the merits of his works are too well known, and too universally admired, to need any panegyric. This pleasing composer, and amiable man, died in August, 1727, in the fiftieth year of his age.

The immediate cause of his death, was an illness, occasioned by his attendance on his duty at the coronation of his late Majesty, George the Second. He was buried in the north aisle of Westminster Abbey, where a monument with a long and honourable inscription was erected to his memory, at the expense of his intimate friend and admirer, Humphrey Wyrley Birch, Esq. whose passion for church music of the pathetic kind, particularly the funeral service by Purcell and Croft, was such, that he would quit the most remote part of the kingdom, and travel night and day, in order to hear it performed in Westminster Abbey.

JOHN WELDON, born at Chichester, learned the rudiments of music of Mr. John Porter, organist of Eton College, and afterwards received instructions from Henry Purcell. He was for some time organist of New College, Oxford. In 1701, he was appointed a Gentleman Extraordinary of the Chapel Royal; and in 1708, succeeded Dr. Blow, as one of his Majesty's organists. In 1715, upon the establishment of a second composer's place in the King's chapel, Weldon was the first who filled that station, of which he appeared conscientiously determined to fulfil all the duties; for before he had been long in possession of this office, he gave proofs of his abilities and diligence, in the composition of the Communion Service, as well as the several anthems required by the conditions of his appointment. He was likewise organist of St. Bride's Church, and of St. Martin's in the Fields.

Weldon's powers as a composer were very limited. His anthems had the singular advantage of being sung by the justly celebrated Mr. Richard Elford; but now, however ably executed, they cannot but appear feeble and antiquated.

These productions appear flimsy after those of Croft, and Dr. Greene's after Handel's; yet Greene compared with Weldon is a giant. As a secular composer, Weldon had his admirers: his song for

two voices, "As I saw fair Clora walk alone," was long in favour with the public; and his air in the *Judgment of Paris*, "Let ambition fire thy mind," is a melody so natural and pleasing, that, like an evergreen in vegetation, it will always be fresh and blooming. And there is no air in greater estimation than this, even at present, as sung in the English opera of *Love in a Village*, to the words, "Hope, thou nurse of young desire."

Weldon died in 1736, and was succeeded in the King's Chapel, by the late excellent Dr. Boyce.

MAURICE GREENE, was the son of the Rev. Thomas Greene, vicar of St. Olave, Jewry, in London, and nephew of John Greene, serjeant at law. He was brought up in the choir of St. Paul; and when his voice broke, was bound apprentice to Brind, the organist of that cathedral.

He was early noticed as an elegant organ-player and composer for the church, and obtained the situation of organist of St. Dunstan in the West, before he was twenty years of age. In 1717, on the death of Daniel Purcell, he was likewise elected organist of St. Andrew's, Holborn; but the next year his master Brind dying, Greene was appointed his successor, by the dean and chapter of St. Paul's: upon which event, he resigned both the places which he had previously obtained. In 1726, on the death of

Dr. Croft, he was appointed organist and composer to the Chapel Royal; and on the death of Eccles, in 1735, master of his Majesty's band. In 1730, he obtained the degree of doctor in music at Cambridge, and was appointed public music professor in the same University, in the room of Dr. Tudway.

Greene was an intelligent man, a constant attendant at the opera, and an acute observer of the improvements in composition and performance, which Handel, and the Italian singers employed in his dramas, had introduced into this country. His melody is therefore more elegant, and his harmony more pure, than those of his predecessors, though less nervous and original.

Handel was but too much inclined to treat inferior artists with contempt. What provocation he had received from Greene, after their first acquaintance, when our countryman had a due sense of his gigantic talents, does not appear; but for many years of his life he never spoke of him, without some injurious epithet.

Greene's figure was below the middle size, and he had the misfortune to be very much deformed; yet his address and exterior manners were those of a man of the world, mild, attentive, and well-bred.

The ecclesiastical productions of this artist seldom soar above mediocrity, and sometimes degenerate into a species of indecorous gaiety, incompatible with that gravity, which should always be the leading feature in compositions for the church.

There is, however, considerable merit of various kinds, in the Collection of Catches, Canons, and Two-part Songs, published by Dr. Greene: these are clear, correct, and masterly; and the melodies, for the time when they were produced, are elegant; and the designs intelligent and ingenious. It was sarcastically said, during the life of this composer, that his secular music smelt of the church, and his anthems of the theatre.

During the last years of his life, Dr. Greene began to collect the services and anthems of our old church composers, in order to correct and publish them in score; a plan which he did not live to accomplish, but which was afterwards executed in a very splendid and ample manner by Dr. Boyce, to whom he bequeathed his papers.

Greene died in 1755; and was succeeded, as composer to the Chapel Royal, and master of his Majesty's band, by his above-mentioned worthy pupil, Dr. William Boyce.

JOHN TRAVERS, brought up in St. George's Chapel at Windsor, and afterwards bound appren-

tice to Dr. Greene; about the year 1790 was elected organist of St. Paul's, Covent Garden; and in 1787, on the death of Jonathan Martin, was appointed one of the organists of the King's Chapel. He afterwards attached himself to Dr. Pepusch, and confined his studies solely to the correct, dry, and fanciless style of that master. Consequently, his compositions, however pure the harmony, can only be ranked with pieces of mechanism, which labour alone may produce, without the assistance of genius.

Dr. WILLIAM BOYCE has been very frequently mentioned in the course of this work; as a professor to whom our choral service is greatly indebted, for the well-selected, correct, and splendid collection of our cathedral music, which he published in three volumes, large folio, upon the plan, and by the recommendation of his master and predecessor, Dr. Greene: and now, in gratitude for the care he has taken of the productions and fame of others, it becomes the duty of the musical historian to pay a just tribute to his memory as an artist.

In 1784, he was a candidate for the place of organist of St. Michael's, Cornhill: his competitors were Froud, Young, James Worgan, and Kelway; the latter of whom was elected. He was however appointed the same year organist of Oxford Chapel;

and in 1736, upon the death of Weldon, when Kellway, being elected organist of St. Martin's in the Fields, resigned his situation at St. Michael's, Cornhill, Boyce was not only appointed organist of that church, but also organist and composer to the Chapel Royal.

The same year he set *David's Lamentation over Saul and Jonathan*, which was performed at the Apollo Society.

About the year 1743, he produced his delightful serenata of SOLOMON, which was not only long and justly admired as a pleasing and elegant composition, but still affords great pleasure to the friends of English music, whenever it is performed.

His next publication was entitled "*Twelve Sonatas, or Trios for two Violins and a Bass,*" which were longer and more generally purchased, performed, and admired, than any similar productions, with the single exception of those of Corelli. They were not only in constant use, as chamber music, in private concerts, for which they were originally designed, but in our theatres, as act tunes, and in our public gardens, as favourite pieces, during many years.

In 1749, he set the ode, written by the Rev. Mr. Mason, for the installation of the late Duke of Newcastle, as Chancellor of the University of Cam-

bridge, at which time he was honoured with the degree of doctor in music by that university. Soon after this, he set *the Chaplet*, a musical drama, written by the late Mr. Mendez, for Drury-lane Theatre, which had a very favourable reception and long run, and continued many years in use among the *stock* pieces of that theatre.

Not long after the first performance of this drama, his friend, Mr. Beard, brought on the same stage the Secular Ode written by Dryden, and originally set by Dr. Boyce for Hickford's Room, or the Castle concert, where it was performed in still life.

This piece, though less successful than the *Chaplet*, by the animated performance and amicable zeal of Mr. Beard, was many times exhibited, before it was entirely laid aside.

These productions, with occasional single songs for Vauxhall and Ranelagh, disseminated the fame of Dr. Boyce throughout the kingdom, as a dramatic and miscellaneous composer; while his choral music for the King's Chapel, for the Feast of the Sons of the Clergy at St. Paul's, and for the triennial meetings of the choirs of Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester; at all which performances he constantly presided till the time of his death, established his reputation as an ecclesiastical composer, and an able master of harmony.

Dr. Boyce, with all due reverence for the abilities of Handel, was one of the few of our church composers who neither pillaged nor servilely imitated him. There is an original and sterling merit in his productions, founded as much on the study of our old masters as on the best models of other countries, which gives to all his works a peculiar stamp and character of his own, for strength, clearness, and facility, without any mixture of styles, or extraneous and heterogeneous ornaments.

Dr. Boyce dying in 1779, was succeeded in the Chapel Royal by Mr. Dupuis; and as master of his Majesty's Band by Mr. Stanley.

JOHN STANLEY, B. M. was born in 1713. At two years old he totally lost his sight, by falling on a marble hearth with a china basin in his hand. At the age of seven, he first began to learn music, as an art that was likely to amuse him; without any idea on the part of his friends, circumstanced as he was, that it would be possible for him ever to make it his profession.

His first master was — Reading, organist of Hackney, a scholar of Dr. Blow. But his father observing that he not only received great pleasure from music, but made a rapid progress, placed him with Dr. Greene, under whom he studied with great diligence and success. At eleven years of age, he only

tained the place of organist of Allhallows, Bread-Street; and in 1726, at the age of only thirteen, he was elected organist of St. Andrew's, Holborn, in preference to a great number of candidates.

In 1734, the Benchers of the honourable Society of the Inner Temple, appointed him one of their organists. These two places he retained till the time of his death.

Few professors have spent a more active life in every branch of their art than this extraordinary musician, having been not only a most neat, pleasing, and accurate performer, but also a natural and agreeable composer, and an intelligent instructor. He was the conductor and soul of the Swan and Castle concerts in the city, as long as they subsisted. Upon the death of Handel, he and Mr. Smith undertook to superintend the performance of oratorios during Lent; and after Mr. Smith retired, he carried them on in conjunction with Mr. Linley, till within two years of his death, in 1786.

This ingenious and worthy professor, whose blindness excited the compassion, and whose performance commanded the admiration of the public for so long a period, has not yet ceased to be lamented by his surviving friends; for they have lost in him, exclusive of his musical talents, a most intelligent and agreeable companion, who contributed to the inno-

cent pleasures of society, as materially by his conversation in private, as by his professional merit in public life.

He was succeeded in his office of master of the king's band by the present Sir William Parsons.

DR. NARES was a studious and sound musician, who had distinguished himself as an organ-player and composer of anthems at York, before his advancement to the Chapel Royal in 1758, as successor to Travers. On the death of Bernard Gates, he was likewise appointed master of the children of the Chapel Royal; and in both these capacities, his diligence in composing for the chapel, and in the instruction of the children, to which he devoted his whole time, justly entitled him to great respect.

Dr. Nares dying in 1783, was succeeded in the Chapel Royal by the late Dr. Arnold, and as master of the children by Dr. Ayrton.

Dr. Arnold died on the 22d of October, 1802, at his residence in Duke-street, Westminster, aged 63, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

LETTER XLIII.

August 10th, 1813.

INVENTION OF RECITATIVE, AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MUSICAL DRAMA OR OPERA IN ITALY.

THE annals of modern music have hitherto furnished no event so important to the progress of the art as the recovery or invention of *Recitative*, or *Dramatic Melody*. Till this period, musicians had been chiefly employed in gratifying the ear with "the concord of sweet sounds," without respect to poetry, or aspiring at energy, passion, intellectual pleasure, or variety of effect. An epic poem could never derive great advantage from music, nor music from an epic poem. So long a work as the *Æneid* or *Iliad*, if we suppose either of them to have been originally sung, could admit of few embellishments or refinements from lengthened notes. It was the *lyric* poetry of the ancients, as well as of the moderns, consisting of short effusions of passion or sentiment, in various measures, that called forth the powers of musical expression. A narration, sung like the epic

poems of the ancients by the original bards, or their descendants the Rhapsodists, as well as the historical ballads of later times, must have been set to the most simple and artless melody, or it would have been utterly unintelligible.

PULCI, who is regarded as the Ennius of modern Italy, and the first who attempted an epic poem in the language of that country, is said by Crescimbeni to have sung his *Morgante Maggiore* at the table of Lorenzo de Medici, in the manner of the ancient Rhapsodists, about the year 1450: by which we may conjecture that the music was very simple. This work, printed as early as 1488, was produced at the Tuscan court; and Politian, Ficinus, and Lucrezia de Medici, wife of Alphonsus of Ferrara, all assisted in singing and reciting it, to entertain the illustrious personages with whom that learned court was then crowded.

The *Orlando Inamorato* of Boiardo was written and sung in the same manner at the court of Este, and first printed in 1496. Boiardo recited this poem at Ferrara; and as it was divided into sonnets or stanzas, *which were rehearsed to a tune*, they were denominated CANTOS.

The ORFEO of Politian was certainly the first attempt at the musical drama, which was afterwards perfected by *Metastasio*. The following account of

it may not perhaps be unacceptable : it is taken from the seventeenth volume of the *Parnaso Italiano*, where it is said to be a beautiful piece of poetry, written by the elegant pen of Politian at the dawn of dramatic representation.

To this drama there is an argument in verse. The piece is in five acts, and founded on the ancient fable. Aristæus, a shepherd, the son of Apollo, loved Euridice, the wife of Orpheus, in so violent a manner, that he pursued her in the fields. In her flight she was stung by a serpent, which occasioned her death. Orpheus, by singing, so softened the infernal deities, that they suffered her to depart, on condition that he would not look behind him, till he had quitted their dominions. Orpheus not obeying this injunction, she was forced back to the shades. The Thracian women, exasperated at his grief and resolution never to love another female, tore him to pieces.

Atto primo—Pastorale.

Part of the first scene seems to have been declaimed, though it is in verse, in *terza rime* ; but the rest is called *Canto di Aristæo*.

“ *Udite, selve, mie dolce parole*

“ *Poichè la bella ninfa udir non vuole.*”

“ Hear my soft words, ye woods ! in pity hear,
 “ For the fair nymph disdains to lend an ear !”

These two lines are the burden of his song, which is beautifully pastoral.

Atto secondo—Ninfale.

Aristæus, a Dryad, and chorus of Dryads.

This also is beautiful poetry, consisting of complaints for the death of Euridice.

Atto terzo—Eroico.

Orpheus enters, singing the following Latin verses, accompanying himself on the lyre :

Musa triumphales titulos, et gesta canamus
 Herculis, et forti monstra subacta manu.
 Et timidæ matri preasos ostenderit angues
 Intrepidusque fero riserit ore puer *.

Then the Dryad tells the sorrowful tale of the death of Eurydice.

The whole of this act appears to have been sung. A Satyr follows the afflicted Orpheus, to see whether the mountains are moved at his song.

* This is the subject of Sir Jos. Reynold's infant Hercules.

Atto quarto—Nigrescentia.

Orpheus visits the infernal regions: himself, Pluto, Proserpine, Eurydice, and Tesiphon, are the interlocutors.

*Vien per impetrar mercede o morte
Dunque m'aprite le ferrate porte.*

The whole of this act is admirable, and all the personages speak in character.

Atto quinto, Bacchanale.

Orpheus, one of the Menades (not Thracian women) and chorus of women, who tear him to pieces.

The whole of this drama, which, from its brevity, seems chiefly to have been sung, is admirably calculated for impassioned music of every kind. It contains in all four hundred and thirty-four lines.

Politian (Angelo Poliziano) was born 1454, and died 1494. The revival of literature in his time, may be ascribed to his talents as justly as to those of Petrarca in the preceding century.

Notwithstanding the above effort of Peliziano, it is certain that no musical dramas similar to those, afterwards known by the names of operas and oratorios, had existence in Italy previous to the beginning of the seventeenth century, when persons of

taste and letters in Tuscany being dissatisfied with every former attempt at perfecting dramatic poetry, and exhibitions, determined to unite the best lyric poet with the best musician of their time. Three Florentine noblemen, therefore, Giovanni Bardi, Count of Vernio, Pietro Strozzi, and Jacobo Corsi, all enlightened lovers of the fine arts, selected Ottavio Rinuccini, and Jacobo Peri, their countrymen, to write and set to music the drama of *Dafne*, which was performed in the house of Signor Corsi, in 1597, with great applause; and this seems the true era, whence we may date the opera, or drama, wholly set to music, and in which the dialogue was neither sung in measure, nor declaimed without music, but recited in simple musical notes, which amounted not to singing, and yet was different from the usual mode of speaking. After this successful experiment, Rinuccini wrote *Eurydice*, and *Arianna*, two other similar dramas.

In the same year, however, that *Arianna* (*Ariadne*) set to music by Jacobo Peri, was performed at Florence, a sacred drama, *oratorio*, morality, or mystery in music, of the same kind, by Emilio del Cavaliere, appeared at Rome, which makes it difficult to determine, who was the original inventor of that peculiar species of melody or chant, called *recitative*, and which has ever since been the true characteristic of the opera and oratorio.

To the printed copies of Peri's *opera*, and Cavaliere's *oratorio*, both published in 1600, there is a long preface, in which the invention is claimed by each of these composers. Peri, however, modestly says, "Though Signor del Cavaliere, with wonderful invention brought our kind of music (*la nostra musica*) on the public stage, before any other, that I know of; yet Signor Jacobi Corsi, and Ottavio Rinuccini, were pleased so early as the year 1594, to wish, that I would adapt it, in a different way, and set the fable of Daphne, written by Ottavio Rinuccini, to music, in order to try the power of this species of melody, which they imagined to be such as was used by the ancient Greeks and Romans throughout their dramas."

In the dedication of the oratorio, *Dell' anima del Corpo*, to Cardinal Aldovrandini, it is said by the editor, Guidotti, that the work consists of "singular and new musical compositions, made in imitation of that style, by which the ancient Greeks and Romans are supposed to have produced such great effects by their dramatic representations."—He adds, that, "Seeing the great applause that was universally bestowed upon the productions of Signior Emilio del Cavaliere, a Roman gentleman, who had been enabled by his own industry and abilities so happily to revive the melody of the an-

cient declamation, particularly in three pastorals, which were repeatedly recited in the presence of his Serene Highness, the Duke of Tuscany. During the year 1590, *Il Satiro*, and *La Desperatione di Fileno*, were composed and privately performed; and in 1595, *Il Guioco della Cieca* was exhibited in the presence of Cardinal Monte, and Mont'Alto, and the Archduke Ferdinand, with great admiration, "as nothing like it had ever been seen or heard before." And farther, fixing the precise time when this oratorio was performed at Rome, he says, "Nothing could prove more indisputably what power this style of singing had in exciting devotion, and affecting the heart, than the prodigious applause of the concourse of people assembled together at the performance of this sacred drama; in the oratorio of Vallicella in Rome, last February."

Emilio del Cavaliere, in his own advertisement, speaks of his music as that of the ancients, recovered, or revived; "having power over the affections to excite grief, pity, joy, and pleasure, which was effectually demonstrated in a scene of his *Desperatione di Fileno*, which, when recited by Signora Archilei, whose excellence in music is universally known, drew tears from the audience, while the character of Fileno made them laugh." There

are such instructions given in this preface, for the performance of this simple and infant drama, as would now suit the best productions of Metastasio, set by the first composers for the most eminent singers of modern times.

Giovanni Batista Doni, a learned and elegant writer on music, though extremely warped in his judgment, by a predilection to antiquity, in a Dissertation on the Origin of Stage Singing, gives the following curious and instructive account of the first operas which were performed at Florence.

“ Some kind of *Cantilena*, or melody, has been
 “ introduced in dramatic representations, at all times,
 “ either in the form of intermezzi (interludes) between the acts; or, occasionally, in the body, and
 “ business of the piece. But it is still fresh in the
 “ memory of every one, when the WHOLE DRAMA
 “ was first set to music, and sung from the beginning to the end: because, anterior to the attempt
 “ of *Emilio del Cavaliere*, a Roman gentleman, extremely well versed in music, nothing of that description worth noticing seems to have been undertaken. This composer published a drama at
 “ Rome, in 1600, called, *Dell' Anima, e del Corpo*;
 “ in the preface to which, mention is made of a
 “ piece represented at Florence, in 1588, at the
 “ nuptials of the Grand Duchess, in which were

“ many fragments of his music : and where likewise,
 “ two years after, was represented another drama
 “ set by him, called, *Il Satiro*.”

“ It is necessary, however, to observe, that those
 “ melodies are very different from such as are at
 “ present composed, in what is commonly called;
 “ *recitative* : being, *ariets*, full of contrivances, repeti-
 “ tions, echoes, &c. which are totally different from
 “ the true and genuine theatrical music, of which
 “ Signor Emilio could know nothing for want of
 “ being acquainted with ancient authors, and the
 “ usages of antiquity. It may therefore be truly
 “ said, that the first attempt at reviving theatrical
 “ music, after it had been lost for so many ages,
 “ was made at Florence, where so many noble arts
 “ have been recovered. This extraordinary event
 “ was brought about by the invention of *recitative*,
 “ which is now universally preferred to the madri-
 “ gal style, in which the words are utterly unin-
 “ telligible.

“ The beginning of this century (1600) was the
 “ era of musical recitation on the public stage at
 “ Florence, though it had before been used there, in
 “ several private exhibitions.

“ There resided in that city during these times,
 “ Signor Gio. Bardi de Conti di Vermio, who was
 “ afterwards called to the service of Pope Clement

“ the Eighth, by whom he was tenderly beloved, and
 “ appointed Maestro di Camera. This most ac-
 “ complished nobleman was particularly attached to
 “ the study of antiquity, and to the theory and prac-
 “ tice of music, to which he had so closely applied
 “ himself for many years, that he became, for the
 “ time in which he lived, a correct and good com-
 “ poser. His house was the constant rendezvous of
 “ all persons of genius, and a kind of flourishing
 “ academy, where the young nobility often assembled
 “ to pass their leisure hours in laudable exercises,
 “ and scientific discourse : but particularly on musi-
 “ cal subjects, when it was the wish of all the com-
 “ pany to recover that art, of which the ancients
 “ related such wonders, as well as other noble in-
 “ ventions, which had been ruined by the irruptions
 “ of barbarians.”

“ During these discussions it was universally
 “ allowed, that, as modern music was extremely
 “ deficient in grace, and the expression of words,
 “ it became necessary, in order to obviate these ob-
 “ jections, that some other species of *cantilena*, or
 “ melody, should be tried, by which the words
 “ should not be rendered unintelligible, nor the verse
 “ destroyed.”

Vincenzo Galilei was at this time in some credit
 among musicians : “ flattered with his reputation, he

“ pursued his musical studies with such diligence,
 “ that, either by the assistance of others, or the force
 “ of his own genius, he composed his work upon the
 “ abuse of modern music, which has since gone
 “ through two impressions.*

“ Animated by success, Galilei attempted new
 “ things, and, assisted by Signor Giovanni Bardi de
 “ Conti de Vernio, was the first who composed melodies
 “ for a single voice: having modulated that pathetic
 “ scene of Count Ugolino, written by Dante, which
 “ he sung himself very sweetly to the accompani-
 “ ment of a viol. This essay certainly pleased very
 “ much in general: however, there were some in-
 “ dividuals who laughed at the attempt: notwith-
 “ standing which, he set in the same style parts of
 “ the Lamentations of Jeremiah, which were per-
 “ formed before a devout assembly.

“ At this time Giulio Caccini Romano, a young,
 “ elegant, and spirited singer, used to attend these
 “ meetings, at the house of the Count di Vernio:
 “ and being seized with a strong passion for this kind
 “ of music, studied it with great diligence: com-

* Dialogo della musica antica, e moderna, 1588 and 1602. Doni insinuates elsewhere, that Galilei was assisted in this work by Girolamo Mei.

“ posing and singing to a single instrument, which
“ was generally the theorbo, or large lute, played by
“ *Bardilla*, who happened then to be at Florence.

“ Caccini therefore in imitation of Galilei, but in a
“ more beautiful and pleasing style, set many can-
“ zonets, and sonnets, written by excellent poets,
“ and not by such wretched scribblers, as were
“ usually employed before, and are still too fre-
“ quently the favourites of musicians; he appears
“ therefore as the first, who discovered, that the art
“ of counterpoint will not alone complete the educa-
“ tion of a musical composer, as had generally been
“ imagined: and he afterwards confessed in a dis-
“ course prefixed to one of his works, that the con-
“ versations, held at the Count del Vernio's were of
“ more use to him, than thirty years' study, and ex-
“ ercise of his art. Here he likewise claims the
“ merit of having first published songs for a single
“ voice, which, indeed, had the greatest success.
“ And it must be confessed, that we are indebted to
“ him in a great measure, for the new, and graceful
“ manner of singing, which at that period, spread
“ itself all over Italy: for he composed a great
“ number of airs, which he taught to innumerable
“ scholars, among whom was his daughter, who be-
“ came a celebrated singer, and still continues in
“ very high repute.

“ But not to defraud any one of his just praise,
 “ it is necessary to acknowledge in this place, that
 “ Luca Marenzio, who flourished now at Rome, had
 “ brought the madrigal style to the highest degree of
 “ perfection, by the beautiful manner, in which he
 “ made all the several parts of his compositions sing :
 “ for before his time, if the harmony was full, and
 “ masterly, nothing else was required.

“ In the recitative style, however, Caccini had a
 “ formidable rival in Jacobo Peri, a Florentine, who
 “ was not only a good composer, but a famous singer,
 “ and performer on keyed instruments : and applying
 “ with equal diligence and enthusiasm to this kind of
 “ singing, succeeded wonderfully, and met with uni-
 “ versal applause.

“ After the departure of Signor Bardi from Flo-
 “ rence, Signor Jacobo Corsi became the patron of
 “ music, and its professors, as well as of every other
 “ art and science : so that his house, during the re-
 “ mainder of his life, became the retreat of the
 “ muses, and their votaries of every country as well
 “ as of Tuscany. Ottavio Rinuccini was at this time
 “ united with him in the strictest bands of friendship
 “ which seldom is durable, unless cemented by sym-
 “ pathetic affections : and being, as is well known,
 “ an excellent poet, whose works are in the highest
 “ degree, natural, pathetic, full of grace, and in an

“ especial manner calculated for music. As poetry
“ and music are sister arts, he had an opportunity of
“ cultivating both together with equal success, and
“ of communicating his discoveries and refinements
“ to this illustrious assembly.

“ The first poem, set in this way, and performed
“ at the house of Signor Corsi, was *Dafne*, a pas-
“ toral, written by Rinuccini, and set by Jacobo
“ Peri, and Caccini, in a manner, which charmed
“ the whole city. Afterwards, other little fables,
“ and entire dramas were thus recited: but above
“ all, the *Eurydice* of Rinuccini, written, and set to
“ music for the royal nuptials of Mary of Medicis,
“ with the most christian king, Henry the Fourth.
“ The music of this drama, which was publicly ex-
“ hibited at Florence in the most splendid manner,
“ was chiefly composed by Jacobo Peri, who acted
“ a part in it himself, as in his *Dafne*, he had repre-
“ sented Apollo: the rest of the music was by
“ Caccini, and the whole was performed in 1600, as
“ was also, in the same year, and on the same occa-
“ sion, the *Rape of Cephalus*, in which the chief
“ part was set by Caccini.

“ Great applause was likewise bestowed upon
“ *Ariadne*, another dramatic production of Rinuccini,
“ and cloathed in suitable melody by Claudio

“ Monteverde, at present Maestro di Capella to the
 “ Republic of Venice.

“ He afterwards published the principal part of
 “ this piece, which is the *Lamentation of Ariadne*,
 “ and perhaps the most beautiful composition of
 “ this kind which our times have produced. Thus
 “ the original and true architects of this species of
 “ scenical music, were Jacobo Corsi, and Ottavio
 “ Rinuccini, assisted by the three eminent artists
 “ above mentioned, who conferred great honour upon
 “ our city, as well as on the profession of music.”

It is not difficult to discover from this account, that all the patrons, and artists of this new species of music, except Monteverde, were Dilettanti, and shallow Contrapuntists, who, as is usual, condemned, and affected to despise that, which they could not understand, and in which they were unable to excel. The learned Contrapuntists, on the contrary, had abused their art, to the ruin of lyric poetry, and confined it within such narrow bounds, that even instrumental music, made no advance in their hands: for whatever they produced, that was not in canon, and fuge, was utterly, dry, fanciless, and despicable.

These early attempts, however, at clearness, grace, and facility, though they now appear but mean, and feeble, had a happy effect upon the art. In process of time, they approximated parties (for when was

music any more than politics, without its cabals and factions?) and in appealing to the public ear, by bringing music on the stage, drove pedantry to lament the degeneracy of the age in holes and corners; and encouraged zeal and unprejudiced musical learning to unite with taste in simplifying the art, and in calling upon the graces for assistance.

As EURIDICE was the first musical drama, after the invention of recitative, that was publicly represented, the following account of it may not be uninteresting.

This drama, written by OTTAVIO RINUCCINI, and set by JACOBO PERI, was performed at Florence in 1600, on occasion of the marriage of Mary of Medicis to Henry the Fourth of France. The poem and the music were published separately the same year. The poet, in his dedication to the Queen of France, says, "It is generally imagined, that the tragedies of the ancient Greeks and Romans were entirely sung: but this noble kind of singing had not till now been revived, or even attempted, to my knowledge, by any one; and I used to think that the inferiority of our music to that of the ancients, was the cause: till hearing the compositions of Jacobo Peri, to the fable of *Daphne*, I wholly changed my opinion. This drama, written merely as an experiment, pleased so much, that I

“ was encouraged to produce *Euridice*, which was
 “ honoured with still greater applause, when sung to
 “ the music of the same composer, Jacobo Peri,
 “ when it was exhibited in the most magnificent
 “ manner, under the favour and protection of the
 “ Grand Duke, our sovereign, at the nuptials of
 “ your Majesty, in the presence of the Cardinal
 “ Legate, and innumerable princes and nobles of
 “ Italy and France.”

Dr. Burney says, that the only copy of the music, that he was able to find was in the library of the Marchese Rinuccini, a descendant of the author, at Florence; in examining which, he observed that it was printed in *score*, and *barred*, two very uncommon circumstances at the time of its publication: that the *recitative* seemed to have been not only the model of subsequent composers of early Italian operas, but also of the *French* operas of Lulli: that figures were frequently placed over the bass to indicate the harmony, as a *b* for a minor third, a *#* for a major third: that the time changed as often as in the old French serious operas; and though the word *aria* sometimes occurs, it is as difficult to distinguish air from recitative, in this drama, by any superiority of melody, as in those of Lulli, except in the chorusses, which were sung and danced at the same time, like those on the French stage.

Peri, in his preface, after enumerating the eminent personages, who were present at the representation, and the celebrated musicians, to whom his music had been shewn, tells us, that it was sung by the most excellent performers of the time, among whom were Signor Francesco Rasi, a nobleman of Arezzo, who represented the character of Aminto; Signor Brandi, Arcetro; and Signor Melchior Palantrolto, Pluto. He then informs us that, "*behind the scenes,*" Signor Jacobo Corsi played the *harpsichord*; Don Garzia Montalvo, the *chiterone*, or large guitar; Messer Giovambatista del Violino, the *lira grande*, or viol da gamba; and Messer Giovanni Lapi, a *large lute*. These four seem to have composed the whole band!!! Upon the whole then, we may conclude, notwithstanding the magnificent descriptions given of these early operas, by the partiality of their authors, that novelty was their principal recommendation; and when it is recollected, that the airs in these puerile productions were scarcely to be distinguished from recitative, and that the whole band consisted of four most contemptible instruments, we may decidedly pronounce their merit to have been very inconsiderable.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLIV.

August 13, 1813.

STATE OF MUSIC AT ROME, AT THE BEGINNING
OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

IN a discourse by Pietro della Valle, on the music of his own time, addressed by that celebrated traveller, to Lelio Guidiccione, in 1640, and published in the second volume of the works of Batista Doni, at Florence, 1763, there is an interesting, clear, and admirable account of the state of music in Italy, but particularly at Rome, during the early part of the seventeenth century.

This agreeable writer, who had studied music under the best masters from seven years old, and who seems to have been a perfect judge of the subject, happening to differ in opinion from his correspondent, who in conversation had asserted, that music for the last fifty years had been declining, and that there were no professors living, equal to those of former days; endeavours to prove, on the contrary,

346 MUSIC AT ROME, AT THE BEGINNING

so far from having degenerated, that it was actually in a state more nearly approaching perfection, than at any former period.

“ If canons, fugues, inversions, and all the artifices of elaborate and learned compositions, are less practised in vocal music now” (says the author) “ than formerly, it is because they are so unfavourable to poetry, and the intelligence of what is sung: for in fugues of many voices there are as many different words as notes sung at the same time, which occasions such confusion, that it is utterly impossible to discover the sentiment of the poet, which is the soul of the song, and which chiefly renders a voice superior to an instrument. If the words and the notes do not mutually assist in explaining and enforcing each other, they are ill-matched, and unfit to be together. To the confusion arising from all the parts singing different words at the same time, may be added the little attention to accent in fugues, where the ligatures, and other accidents in harmony frequently throw the emphasis on wrong words, and make long syllables short, and short long. Another inconvenience, or rather absurdity, seems inevitable in vocal fugues of much subtilty and contrivance, when quick and slow, chearful and pathetic notes, are moving at the same time, which makes good per-

“ formers unwilling to sing them, as they can neither
 “ display taste nor sense in the execution.

“ The old masters certainly were well acquainted
 “ with harmony, but few knew what use to make of
 “ it. Their compositions abound in the most artful
 “ and difficult inventions and contrivances, which the
 “ ear can neither enjoy nor comprehend in the per-
 “ formance.

“ This is not the method by which modern mas-
 “ ters proceed: they have learned to select and re-
 “ verence good poetry; in setting which they relin-
 “ quish the pedantry of canons, fugues, and other
 “ Gothic inventions; and, in imitation of the an-
 “ cient Greeks, aspire only at expression, grace, and
 “ propriety.

“ The first compositions of this kind that have
 “ been heard in modern times, were *Dafne*, *Euri-*
 “ *dice*, and *Arianna*, written by Rinuccini, and set
 “ by Jacopo Peri and Monteverde, for the courts of
 “ Florence and Mantua.

“ And in Rome, the first who introduced this in-
 “ telligent kind of music to the notice of the pub-
 “ lic, was PAOLO QUAGLIATI, my last harpsichord
 “ master, who was happily imitated by *Traditi** and

* Orazio Traditi was Maestro di Capella in the cather-
 dral of Faenza, in the Roman State, and a very volumi-

" others still living, and who, to the facility and
 " grace of his melody, have added new and greater
 " beauties of their own. If there appear but little
 " complication and contrivance in these modern
 " productions, it must not be ascribed to ignorance
 " or want of art, but regarded as the effect of judg-
 " ment and choice, reserving such resources for par-
 " ticular occasions. In this respect they differ
 " widely from their predecessors who never lost an
 " opportunity of vanquishing difficulties of their
 " own making."

Della Valle's account of the manner in which the
 first opera, or *secular* musical drama, was exhibited
 at Rome, is so curious and entertaining, that it were
 injustice both to him and the reader, not to translate
 it as *literally* as possible.

" My master, Quagliati was an excellent Maestro
 " di Capella: he introduced a new species of music
 " into the churches of Rome, not only in composi-
 " tions for a single voice (*monodie*) but for two,
 " three, four, and very often more voices in chorus,
 " ending with a numerous crowd of many choirs, or
 " chorusses, singing together: specimens of which
 " may be seen in many of his motets, that have been

new composer of masses, psalms, and motets, besides his
 productions in the recitative style.

“ since printed. And the music of my CART, or
 “ moveable stage, composed by the same Quagliati,
 “ in my own room, chiefly in the manner he found
 “ most agreeable to me, and performed in masks
 “ through the streets of Rome, during the Carnival
 “ of 1606, was the first dramatic action, or repre-
 “ sentation in music, that had ever been heard in that
 “ city*.

“ Though no more than five voices, or five instru-
 “ ments, the exact number that an ambulant cart
 “ could contain, were employed: yet these afforded
 “ great variety: as, besides the dialogue of single
 “ voices, sometimes two, or three, and at last, all
 “ the five sung together, which had an admirable
 “ effect.

“ The music of this piece, as may be seen in the
 “ copies of it that were afterwards printed, though
 “ dramatic, was not entirely in simple recitative,
 “ which would have been tiresome; but ornamented

* Here he seems to have forgotten the performance of Emilio del Cavaliere's oratorio, *Dell' Anima, e del Corpo*, which was exhibited at Rome, in action on a stage in the church of Santa Maria della Vallicella, in 1600. Had Della Valle said the first *secular* dramatic representation of this kind in music, he would have been more correct.

350 MUSIC AT ROME, AT THE BEGINNING

“ with beautiful passages, and movements in mea-
“ sure, without deviating, however, from the true
“ theatrical style, on which account it pleased ex-
“ tremely, as appeared from the prodigious cen-
“ course of people whom it attracted ; and who, so
“ far from being tired, heard it performed five or six
“ several times, some even continued to follow our
“ cart to ten or twelve different places, where it
“ stopt, and never quitted us, as long as we re-
“ mained in the street, which was from four o’clock
“ in the afternoon till midnight.”

This narration furnishes a curious circumstance in the history of the stage ; that the first opera, or musical secular drama, performed in modern Rome, like the first tragedy in ancient Greece, was exhibited in a cart.

It has been imagined by many of the learned, that the recitative in modern operas is a revival of that species of melody, in which ancient dramas were sung ; and here the moveable stage on which it was performed, like that used by Thespis at Athens, affords another striking resemblance.

“ *Plaustris vexisse Poemata Thespis.*”

HORACE.

Della Valle, after having proved that the *singing* of his time was better, and the *compositions* more va-

ried, more rational, and more congenial to poetry, than those of more ancient date, proceeds to speak of *instrumental music*; and, after discriminating the different modes of playing on an instrument, in a solo, in a full piece, in accompanying a voice, or leading a band, he says, he must agree with his friend that *solo playing*, however exquisite and refined, at length tires; and that it had frequently happened to organists of the highest class, when lost and immured in carrying on a happy subject of voluntary, to be silenced by a bell; which never occurred to singers, who, when they leave off, displease the congregation, to whom their performance always seems too short.

He then proceeds to consider *solo songs* and music in many parts. His friend, among the *Soprani*, or treble voices of his youth, had greatly praised the *Falsetti*, who were employed in the Pope's chapel, and elsewhere; and Della Valle says, he remembered one of them, who had great execution, and went up to the stars—*par cantore di gorge, e di pasteggi, che andava alto alle stelle*; and mentions Ornatico, a very good singer, either as a tenor, or in a *falset*; Ottavuccio, and Veronio, famous tenors, who all three sung in his *cart*. “These, however, (he adds) trills, graces, and a good *portamento*, or direction of voice excepted, were extremely deficient in the

“ other requisites of good singing: such as *piano*
 “ and *forte*, swelling and diminishing the voice by
 “ minute degrees: expression, assisting the poet in
 “ fortifying the sense and passion of the words, ren-
 “ dering the tone of voice cheerful, pathetic, tender,
 “ bold, or gentle, at pleasure. These, with other
 “ embellishments, in which singers of the present
 “ times excel, were never thought of, even at Rome,
 “ till Emilio del Cavaliere, in his old age, gave a
 “ good specimen of them from the Florentine school,
 “ in his *Oratorio* in the Chiesa Nuova, at which I
 “ was myself, when very young, present.”

The two following extracts fix the precise date of a delicate point of musical history, the first establishment of *Ecirati* in the Pope's chapel, and the employment of them in early operas.

“ Father *Girolamo Rossini*, of Perugia, Priest of
 “ the Congregation of the Oratory, flourished in the
 “ seventeenth century. He was an excellent singer
 “ in Soprano, and was the first *Ecirato* employed
 “ in the Pontifical Chapel, in which, till then, the
 “ soprano, or treble part, was sung by Spaniards,
 “ in *falses*. Padre Rossini was admitted into the
 “ Pontifical Chapel in 1601, and died in 1644.”

* Padre Girolamo Rossini da Perugia, prete della Congregazione dell' Oratorio, fiori nel seculo XVII. Fu ec-

“ Giovanni de Sanctos, a Spaniard, who died at
 “ Rome in 1625, was the *last* Soprano who sung
 “ with a falset voice in the Papal Chapel.”*

These two records, together with what Della Valle says on the subject, will, it is hoped, sufficiently gratify reasonable curiosity, with respect to the origin of a custom too horrible to think upon, and too disgusting to name.

To return to Della Valle's account of singers in Italy, from the beginning of the sixteenth century to the year 1640, when he wrote his Discourse. After saying, he had been present at the performance of

cellente cantore della parte di soprano, è fu il primo evirato, che avesse luogo nella Capella Pontificia, avenda fin d'allora servito la Capella in qualità di soprani i nazionali Spagnuoli con voce di falsetto. Il pralodato Padre fu amesso tra cantori Pontifici nel 1601; e morì, nel 1644, alli 23 di Decembre. Vedi Adami—Osserv. per ben. reg. il Coro della Cap. Pontif.

* Giovanni de Sanctos, Spagnuolo, quasi morì in Rome nell' anno 1625, e fu sepolto nella Chiesa di S. Giovanni id Campo Marzo. Estato l'ultimo soprano di voci di falsetto, che abbia servito la Capella Pontificia. Vede Matteo Fornari, Notizia Horiche della Cap Pontif.

the first oratorio in Rome, he tells us, that the style of singing began to improve from that time; and at present, says he, we have Nicolini, Bianchi, Giovannini, Lorenzini, Mario, and many others, who not only equal, but surpass the singers of more early times, at least, in taste and judgment. " But let us quit the consideration of all other voices, and speak only of *Soprani*, the greatest ornaments of music. You are pleased (says he to his friend) to compare the falsetti of former times with the *Soprani*, who are at present so common. But who ever then sung like a Guidobaldo, a Cavalier Loretto, a Gregorio, an Angeluccio, a Marc-Antonio, and many more that might be named? The best resource, then, was a boy with a good voice; but boys, the instant they begin to know their business, lose their voices; and it is allowed, even while they remain in their greatest perfection, that their performance, on account of their youth and inexperience, must inevitably be devoid of taste, judgment, and grace; indeed, it is generally so mechanical and unfeeling, that I hardly ever heard a boy sing without receiving more pain than pleasure.

" The *Soprani* of the present times being, on the contrary, persons of mature age and judgment, sing with such science, expression, and taste, as

“ to delight every hearer of sensibility. During the
 “ last age, there was no such singer, except Padre
 “ Soto, and afterwards Girolamo, who is still liv-
 “ ing.

“ At present, every court and chapel in Italy is
 “ furnished with them; and besides, what age could
 “ boast of so many excellent female singers?”

Here he celebrates the talents of a great number, who had been in high favour at Florence and elsewhere, both for dramatic and chamber singing, but particularly at Rome. Among others, he records the talents of La Francesca Caccini, by the Tuscans called La Cecchina, daughter of the famous Giulio Caccini, Romano, who had been many years the admiration of Florence, where he heard her himself in his youth, not only for her musical abilities both in singing and composition, but also for her poetry, both in the Latin and Tuscan language.

He then speaks of the nuns of his time, as exquisite singers; particularly *La Verovia*, and others, Nello Spirito Santo at Rome, who for many years had astonished the world; the nuns of Santa Lucca in Silici; as well as those of San Sylvestro of Magnopoli, and Santa Chiara, whom people flocked to hear as miraculous. In short, he concludes, that such was the number and excellence of the singers of his time, that those who were not content with

their performance, must certainly be either too fond of antiquity, as is usual with old people, or too fastidious, and unwilling to be pleased.

He then speaks of composition, and asks his friend who could possibly bear the villanelle, or ballads of forty or fifty years ago? which now seem, both in regard to the words and music, the production of some strolling, blind fiddler. "The songs in favour at present," adds he, "are of a very different kind;" and instances, among the serious, one by Luigi, beginning, "*Or che la notte del silenzio amica,*" and among the comic, one by ORAZIO, a celebrated harp-player, "*per torbido Mare;*" which, for delicacy, he thought could not be exceeded. And for those who delight in triple time, and in Canzonette alla Napolitana, which are all in Spanish time, and in such favour at present with the vulgar, what could be prettier than those published by Geo. Batista Bellis a few years ago? As for Sicilian airs, which are extremely graceful and pathetic, Della Valle says, that he himself was perhaps the first who brought them to Rome from Naples, in 1611, and afterwards from Sicily; "though at present," he adds, "they are as common and as well sung here, as in Sicily itself." He then speaks of the Spanish Ciacona, the Saraband, the Passacaille, the Portuguese Ciacotta, and many other foreign airs, lately

introduced at Rome, but with which the villanelle and canzonette of that city were greatly already enriched; and adds, that in his travels, he himself had made a very curious collection of Persian, Turkish, Arabian, and Indian tunes, wholly different from those of Italy, both in time and intervals.

Della Valle then proceeds to tell his friend Guidiccioni, that if he was long ago almost *out of himself* when he heard Correggio perform on the organ at Parma, he had been informed, that he likewise was in extasy a few years since, when he heard the verses of Virgil sung, beautifully set to music by the elder Mazzocchi.

After this he mentions the Madrigalists of his own time, who had polished and improved that species of composition far beyond those of the preceding age. However, he says, madrigals grew every day in less request than formerly, as the singing single songs with taste and expression, accompanied by an instrument, was now preferred to four or five people poring over a book at a table, which appeared too studious and scholastic for the entertainment of a company. Notwithstanding he acknowledges, that not only learned madrigals were still composed by Muzio, Pecci, Zoilo, Nenna, and Mel, but masses also, and motets in the grand style of the preceding century; particularly by the younger Mazzocchi,

358 MUSIC AT ROME, AT THE BEGINNING

who, at the Roman College, not long since admirably gratified the lovers of full compositions by pieces of *six choirs*; and since that at St. Peter's Church, with a mass for *twelve or sixteen* choirs, with a choir or chorus of *eccho* placed at the top of the cupola, which in the amplitude of that vast temple, had a wonderful effect. Whoever is able to accomplish this, is capable of doing any thing that can be required of the most learned contrapuntist. "But give me leave to observe, says Della Valle, that these gigantic performances, into which all the harmony possible is crowded, are so apt to be coarse and violent, that every idea of taste, expression, and refinement, is annihilated; and men content themselves with such playing and singing, in the aggregate, as, if heard alone, would not be good enough for a barber's shop in the street."

"He had a reverence, he said, for old compositions, which he would carefully preserve, not for use, but like antiques, to grace a collection or museum."

In the Pontifical Chapel, which, in choral music, gives law to all other christian churches in the world, some ancient compositions are still in use, but not to the utter exclusion of every thing modern, for composers are always retained there, in order to furnish a constant supply of new productions.

A few years ago, after his return to Italy, Della Valle says, he had heard the vespers performed on Easter Monday, by the nuns only, at the church *Dello Spirito Santo*, in florid music, in such perfection as he had never before witnessed: and on the last Christmas eve, in attending the whole service of the church of St. Apollinare, where every part of it was performed agreeably to so solemn an occasion. Though, in consequence of arriving late, he was compelled to stand the whole time in a very great crowd, he remained there with the utmost pleasure, so excellent was the music then performed. In the beginning, he was particularly enchanted by the "*Venite Exultemus*," which was more exquisite than words can describe. "I know not," says Valle, "who was the author of it, but suppose it to have been the production of the Maestro di Capella of that church."*

* There was no master in Italy at that time, 1640, whose compositions this description will so well suit as those of the admirable Carissimi, who was in all probability the Maestro in question, though so young that his fame had not yet spread. However, it was in composing for this church, that he acquired that great and extensive reputation, which he enjoyed during a long life, and to which his productions are still justly entitled.

These extracts from Della Valle evince a thorough knowledge of his subject; they are written with the spirit of an auditor, and are so much more alive, than such fragments and scraps of intelligence as could be gleaned of so remote a period elsewhere from the works of different authors: we have, therefore, as the reader will remark, been in no haste to take our leave of so good and intelligent a guide; and it is hoped, that the present patrons of ancient music, will not be offended at his partiality to what *he* calls *modern*, as this very music is now become venerable for its antiquity. The family of Grumblers is very ancient. Plato, two thousand years ago, complained of the degeneracy of the music of *his* time, as loudly as the greatest enemies of innovation can possibly do at present: where then can judgment, reason, and good taste, draw the line between improvement and corruption? If it were practicable in the history of the world to find a period, when all mankind were of one opinion, in regard to matters of fancy and fashion, we might then fix our standard of perfection; but so long as, in all our inquiries, we are unable to meet with any such *Golden Age* of music, the partisans on both sides must still continue at war, without the least hope that the temple of Janus will ever be shut.

The learned, who neither understand the art, nor

feel the power of music, and are inimical to its cultivation, are compelled by historical evidence, however reluctantly, to allow, that the ancient Greeks and Romans *sang their dramas throughout*; but then they comfort themselves with the supposition, that this was done in simple narrative melody, like recitative, without what they call the absurd and preposterous modern mixture of AIRS, accompanied with instruments playing melodies different from the voice part. Airs, thus accompanied, in a musical drama, may be difficult to defend by cold reason and tasteless criticism; but they are nevertheless, delightful to the sense of hearing, to which all music is peculiarly addressed. And if melody, united with harmony, cannot narrate or moralize, and is equally unable to instruct the mind and improve the heart, it can neither *deprave* nor *corrupt* either. Yet music is a very expressive and intelligible language to all those whose ears and hearts are obedient to its vibrations. Why, therefore, should we join with those phlegmatic censurers, whose reasonings and complaints only convince us, that they are as deaf to the sweetness of refined tones, as near-sighted persons are blind to remote objects. The candid *hearer* of music, as well as the composer and performer, must be gifted with *one* perfect sense at least. Every

eye that can assist its owner to avoid a post, is not able to discern the beauties of a fine picture : nor every ear that faithfully conveys to the mind the most rapid and minute articulations of speech, equally faithful in conveying to the inmost recesses of the soul, those excellent inflexions of a musical voice, or instrument, which transport every sincere votary of the tuneful art.

The lively St. Evremond, and the candid Addison, are striking instances of insensibility to the essential beauties of musical sound. With the decision of men of letters, ignorant of music, and impenetrable to its powers, they determine the merit of French and Italian operas, without the least knowledge or feeling ; and their decisions are often referred to by other authors, with as great a degree of triumph, as if they were mathematical demonstrations,

LETTER XLV.

August 17, 1813.

STATE OF MUSIC AT BOLOGNA, AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY;
AND PROGRESS OF THE MUSICAL DRAMA IN
VARIOUS PARTS OF ITALY.

THE inhabitants of BOLOGNA not only dispute the priority of musical dramas with the Romans and Venetians, but even with the Florentines, who, as we have already shewn, had exhibitions of this description as early as 1590. However interesting such discussions may be to the good people of Italy, the decision is of little importance to English readers. We refer those who wish for a more minute investigation of the subject, to two small books, "*Le Glorie della Poesia, e della Musica*"—"The Glory of Poetry and Music," published at Venice, in 1730; and "*Serie Cronologica die drammi recitati su di publici Teatri di Bologna, dall' anno 1600 sino al corrente, 1737*"—"A Chronological Series of Musical Dramas, printed at Bologna,

"1737." By these publications it appears, that the earliest Italian operas were performed in the palaces of princes, at the celebration of marriages, and on other particular occasions of joy and festivity, at the expense of the sovereign or government, and not in theatres supported by general voluntary contributions.

Though a regular series of the names and authors of the several operas performed in the city of Bologna, from the year 1600, is preserved; yet it is not possible to discover who composed the music of any of these dramas, previous to the year 1610, when GIROLAMO GIACOBBI, Maestro di Capella of San Petronio, set the opera of *Andromeda*. He was a learned and classical composer of the Bologna school, whose productions for the church are still much esteemed. His opera of *Andromeda* was revived eighteen years after its first performance.

In 1616, the famous drama of *Euridice*, written by Rinuccini, which had been exhibited at Bologna in 1601, was again performed there, to the music of Jacobo Peri, Marco da Gagliano, and Girolamo Giacobbi; when, according to Ger. Egnazio Corsi, who was one of the audience, the applause and crowd of strangers attracted thither, were as great as in ancient times at the exhibitions of the gladiators, and other public games, with which the Emperor

Vitellius regaled the people in the great amphitheatre of that city. Though operas continued to be performed almost every year at Bologna, during the seventeenth century; yet they were chiefly composed by Venetian masters, till the year 1674, when PETRONIO FRANCESCHELLI set the prologue to the opera of Caligula; and afterwards, in 1676, *Oronté di Mensi*; 1677, *Arsinoë*; and *Apollo in Tessaglia*, in 1679.

There does not appear to have been any public theatre in this city, till the year 1680, when four operas are said to have been performed, "*nel Teatro publico.*"

Subsequent to this period, the music of their operas seems to have been supplied by native composers, among whom Giuseppe Felice Tosi, Giacomo Perti, Giov. Paolo Colonna, Giuseppe Aldrovandini, Firro Albergati, the elder Bononcini, and Pistocchi, the celebrated singer, contributed to form and render that school eminent. These masters have severally contributed so materially to the progress of their art, that it were injustice not to specify their peculiar merits.

GIACOMO PERTI, born in 1656, was a solid, grave composer of church music. Of his theatrical style, but little is now known. We may, however, reasonably conclude, that it was excellent; as he

long continued to be employed, not only for the opera of Bologna, but for those of Venice, and other cities of Italy.*

Paolucci has printed a good duet by this master; and Padre Martini, has given several admirable specimens of his science, in his "*Saggio di Con-trappunto.*"

This great harmonist, however, does him still more honour, by calling himself his disciple. Pertì must have nearly attained the age of 100; for his name appears as the composer of *Atide*, in 1679, and, according to Quadrio, he was living in 1744.

TOSI, the father of the author of an excellent treatise on singing, well known in England by the late Mr. Galliard's translation, composed between the years 1679 and 1691, ten operas chiefly for the theatre of Bologna.

GIOV. PAOLO COLONNA, Maestro di Capella, de S. Petronio di Bologni, was the son of *Antonio Colonna*, alias *del Corno*, a celebrated organ builder of Brescia. He composed but few operas, one of which was *Amílcar in Cipro*, for the theatre of

* Mr. V. Novello, organist to the Portuguese embassy has lately published a very fine specimen of this composer's church style, in his "*Selection of Sacred Music.*"

Bologna, in 1692. He published, however, towards the latter end of the seventeenth century, many excellent works for the church, of which Padre Martini has given a list, in the second volume of his *History of Music*.

It was the opinion of the late Dr. Boyce, that Colonna was Handel's model for chorusses accompanied by instrumental parts, different from the vocal. His *Psalms in eight parts*, published at Bologna, in 1694, have been very justly admired for their masterly composition. Paolucci has inserted the hymn "*Pange lingua*," set by Colonna in plain counterpoint of four parts, in a manner sufficiently simple and syllabic, for the most zealous reformers of church music. His "*Sacre lamentatione della settimana santa, a voce sole*," published in 1689, contain many pleasing and elegant fragments of pathetic recitative, which cannot but be admired by those, who are unacquainted with the matchless works of CARISSIMI, who has anticipated not only all the ideas of Colonna in this species of music, but likewise almost all those of every composer, even of the last century.

ALDOVRANDINI, between the years 1696 and 1711, composed for Bologna and Venice seven operas, some of which were *comic*, particularly one;

entitled, "Amor Torna 5, al 50," written in the dialect of the Bolognese peasants.

COUNT ALBERGATTI was a Bolognese dilettante of a very illustrious family in that city. His musical compositions are very much esteemed. Dr. Burney met with two of his operas, *Gli amici*, 1699; and *Il Principe Selvaggio*, 1712.

Of GIOVANNI MARIA BONONCINI, and his two sons, Giovanni, and Marc' Antonio, it will be necessary to speak hereafter in a more particular manner, as music is greatly indebted to their genius and abilities.

Giovanni Maria calls himself *Modanese*; he seems, however, to have resided principally at Bologna, and to have published the chief part of his works in that city, where his son Giovanni's *Duetti da Camera*, Op. 8vo. likewise first appeared. Both were likewise members of the Philharmonic Society there, and may be properly considered as ornaments of the Bologna School of Counterpoint.

Of the celebrated PISTOCCHI, who founded the School of Singing in that city, Mr. Galliard, in a note to his translation of Tosi, has given a very satisfactory account.

"This performer," says he, "was very famous about the latter end of the last century, and re-

“ fined the manner of singing in Italy, which was
 “ then a little crude. His merit in this is acknow-
 “ ledged by all his countrymen, and contradicted by
 “ none.”

It is recorded of him, that in his youth, when he first performed in public, he had a very fine treble voice, and was courted and admired universally; but by a dissolute life destroyed his voice, and dissipated his fortune. Being reduced to the utmost misery, he entered into the service of a composer, as a copyist, where he availed himself of that opportunity of learning the rules of composition, and became a considerable proficient. After some years, he recovered a small portion of voice, which by time and practice changed to a fine counter-tenor. Having experience on his side, he took care of it; and, as encouragement returned, he travelled all over Europe; where, hearing the different manners and tastes of the different performers, he appropriated to himself the peculiar excellencies of them all, and formed that fascinating association which he produced in Italy, where he was in his turn admired and imitated. At length he settled at the court of Anspach, where he lived in great affluence, and received a considerable stipend, as Maestro di Capella.

After continuing there several years, in an easy and honourable station, he returned to Italy, and re-

370 MUSIC AT BOLOGNA, AT COMMENCEMENT

tired into a convent at Bologna; where, when his duties of devotion were performed, he instructed, for his amusement, such young professors, as were remarkable for voice, disposition, diligence, and good morals.

Tosi speaks of Pistocchi, as remarkable in his day for a strict adherence to measure, and for a firm and steady manner of introducing graces and embellishments, without breaking its proportions. The celebrated *Bernacchi*, *Pasi*, *Minelli* of Bologna, and *Bartolini* of Faenza, were four of his most renowned scholars.

ANTONIO BERNACCHI, who was several years in England, supported the reputation of the Bologna School of Singing, many years after the decease of his master Pistocchi. AMADORI, GUARDUCCI, and RAAFF, the celebrated tenor, were scholars of Bernacchi; as likewise was Signor Giambatista MANCINI, Maestro di Cante della Corte Imperiale, e Accademico Filarmonico; who, in 1774, published at Vienna, "*Pensieri e Riflessioni pratiche sopra il Canto figurato*," which serves as a very useful supplement to his countryman Tosi's treatise on the same subject.

Signor Mancini confirms what has been frequently related of his master Bernacchi, that when he first appeared on the stage, having neither a good natural

voice, nor a good manner of singing, he was so ill received, that his best friends advised him, either to quit the profession of a singer entirely, or to place himself wholly under the direction of Pistocchi. Having followed their advice in this last particular, Pistocchi received him with kindness; and marking out a course of study for him, Bernacchi not only followed it implicitly, applying with unwearied diligence for several years, but during this time declined singing, not only in churches and theatres, but even in private parties to his most intimate friends: till, having the full consent of his instructor, he appeared with such eclat, that he was regarded by the best judges, though his voice was originally defective, as the most refined singer of his time.

Pistocchi's compositions for the stage acquired him considerable reputation. He set *Leandro, o sia gl' Amori fatali*, and *Girello*, for Venice. The first was performed in 1679, in a manner not uncommon at that time: the characters were represented by wooden figures on the stage, while the singers performed behind the scenes. And in the second, in 1682, the personages were supplied by figures in wax, while the singers were invisible. This resembled the Roman custom in the time of Andronicus, when, according to Livy, one of the

Roman players sung, while another acted before him.*

Pistocchi also set the opera of *Narciso*, written by Apostolo Zeno, by command of the Margrave of Brandenburg, in 1697;† and *Le Risa de Democrito*, for the Imperial Court at Vienna, in 1700. This opera was performed with great applause at Bologna, in 1708, and at Florence in 1710, to the same music.

Progress of the Musical Drama at Rome.

It does not appear that any regular theatre was opened, for the performance of operas, in this ancient and renowned city, during the early part of the seventeenth century; nor can we indeed discover, that any regular opera, or secular musical drama,

* Gagliano tells us too, that in his *Dafne*, there were two Apollos, one to fight, and another to sing.

† In the preface to this drama, he is called “*Musico di singolar eccellenza, chi non solamente le fece egli stesso in musica, ma rappresentò mirabilmente la parte di Narciso.*” Op. dram. d’Apost. Zeno, tom. 7. p. 295.

was ever performed there, till the year 1682, when "*Il Ritorno di Angelica nell' Indie, Drama Musicale*," is recorded by Leo Allacci, in his *Drammaturgia*, to have been performed at Rome, without informing us where, or by whom set to music or sung. Several musical dramas were however exhibited there, at the palaces of ambassadors and other great personages, between 1682 and 1661, when *Clearco*, set by *Tenaglia*, a Roman master, was performed. This composer, who had distinguished himself by his productions for the church, is celebrated by Della Valle, among eminent Roman musicians, in 1640.

The first *public* theatre opened for the exhibition of musical dramas at Rome, in modern times, was *Il Torre di Nona*, where *Giasone* was performed in 1671. No other theatre seems to have been used for this purpose in that city, till 1679, when the opera *Dov' è Amore, è Pietà*, set by Bernado Pasquini, the famous organist, was represented *Nella Sala de Signori Capranica*. This theatre still subsists.

The year 1680 is rendered memorable to musicians, by the opera of *L'Onesta negl' Amore*, as it was the first dramatic production of the elegant, profound, and original composer, ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI, who has many titles to a permanent

374 MUSIC AT ROME, AT THE COMMENCEMENT

reputation; not only for his numerous operas and exquisite cantatas, which are still as much esteemed by the curious, as they were in his lifetime by the public, but also for establishing the fame of the Neapolitan School of Counterpoint, which has since been so fertile in great musicians; among whom, his admirable son, DOMENICO SCARLATTI, and his elegant scholar, ADOLPHO HASSE, detto il Sassone, are distinguished by all lovers of music, who are able to separate original genius from froth and bombast; and who prefer taste, propriety, and exquisite sensibility, to noise and Gothic barbarism.

This early production of Alessandro Scarlatti was performed in the palace of Christina, Queen of Sweden, who, after her abdication in 1654, had chosen Rome for her residence, where she died in 1688.

In 1681, the opera of *Lisimaco*, set by LEGRENZI, was likewise performed in the palace of her Swedish Majesty. The next year, four different operas were performed in this city; but as neither the names of the composers or singers are preserved, a farther account of them is unnecessary. Indeed, though counterpoint was very successfully cultivated in the Pontifical Chapel, by various composers of great abilities, dramatic music offers nothing very

interesting, till about the latter end of the seventeenth century, when the productions of Alessandro Scarlatti, Giovanni Bononcini, and Francesco Gasparini; with the vocal performance of Siface, Pistocchi, Nicolini; and the instrumental of Corelli on the violin, Pasquini on the harpsichord, Gaetano on the Theorbo, and Bononcini himself on the violoncello, who frequently displayed their several talents in the same theatre, were celebrated throughout Europe.

In 1694, *Tullio Ostilio* and *Serse*, both composed by Bononcini, had these advantages; and in the dramatis personæ of *Tullio*, we find not only the names of Pistocchi and Nicolini, but also of several other favourite performers. In 1696, a new theatre was opened at the Aliberti Palace, with two operas, composed by *Perti* of Bologna—*Penelope la Casta*, and *Furia Camillo*. The abilities of this master, whose music for the church is still deservedly esteemed in Italy, have been already considered.

Progress of the Musical Drama, or Opera, at Venice.

Though the inhabitants of this city have cultivated and encouraged the musical drama, with more diligence and zeal than those of any other in Italy,

during the latter part of the seventeenth, and the beginning of the last century, yet it was not very early established there. The first regular opera performed at Venice, after the invention of recitative, was *Andromeda*, written by Benedetto Ferrari, of Reggio, in the Modenese State; and set to music by Francesco Manelli, of Tivoli, in 1637. Ferrari was himself a celebrated performer on the lute, an able poet, and a good musician.

Having collected together a company of the best singers in Italy, he brought out this opera, in the theatre of St. Cassiano, at his own expence, in a very sumptuous manner. An extraordinary instance of spirit and enterprize in an individual of moderate fortune, to vie with princes in the support of an exhibition, of which, till then, it was thought, they only could support the splendour.

In 1638, *La Maga fulminata*, by the same poet and musician, was exhibited, at the charge and risk of Ferrari, and of five or six of the performers, in a very sumptuous and magnificent manner, though the expence, as we are told, did not amount to 2000 crowns: a sum, which at present, says the author of "*The Glory of Poetry and Music*, 1730," is hardly sufficient to satisfy the demands of an ordinary singer. But in those days the performers either shared in the profits, or were content with moderate

salaries: public singers being then but seldom wanted, and then only in the capital cities of Italy; whereas, at present, dramatic representations abound even in villages.*

In 1639, there were four operas performed at Venice, at the two theatres of San Cassiano, and Santi Giovanni, e Paolo. These were, *La Delia*, written by Giulio Strozzi, a favourite lyric poet at the time, and set by Manelli; *Le Nozze di Tété, è di Pelco*, set by Francesco Cavalli, a composer of whom we shall have occasion to speak hereafter; *L'Armida*, of which both the words and music were the production of Benedetto Ferrari; and *L'Adone*, set by the celebrated Claudio Monteverde, who more than thirty years before had set *Orfeo* and *Arianna*; and, as we have observed in a former letter, was one of the first inventors of recitative and dramatic music.

In 1640, the *Arianna* of Monteverde was revived in a third theatre, that was erected at Venice, and which still subsists, called Il Teatro di S. Moisè; where also were performed, *Gl' Amori di Apollo, e di Dafne*, by Cavalli; and *Il Pastor Regio*, of which Ferrari was poet, composer, and entrepreneur.

* See *Le Glorie della Poes. è della Musica*, pp. 19,—37.

Between the years 1637 and 1727, there were fifteen different theatres erected at Venice, for the exhibition of musical dramas. Several, however, at first were only temporary theatres, or rather booths, "*fabbricati tutti di Tavole*;" though afterwards built on a larger scale with stone.

Between the year 1641, and 1649, there were upwards of thirty different operas performed in the several theatres of Venice, of which the musical composers were, Monteverde, Manelli, Cavalli, Sacrati, Ferrari, Fonte, Marazzoli, and Rovetta. Of *Giasone*, written by Giac. And. Cicognini, and set by Cavalli, one of the four operas performed in 1649, it is said, the grave recitative, began then first to be interrupted by that anacreontic kind of stanza, which has since been called *ARIA*.

The author of "*Storia Critica de Teatri*," asks, whether the musical drama is improved, or injured by this innovation? and answers the question himself with judgment and good taste, by saying, that it is greatly embellished and improved by a judicious and sober use of the discovery, and only injured by the abuse of it: as when a composer neglects the more interesting parts of the drama, to avail himself of the opportunity, which frequent airs afford him, of letting the action languish, in order to express some common, and frivolous sentiment, with intemperate

art and misapplied elegance: which is ever the case, when the true and interesting point of passion is not discerned.

Frequent airs are of infinitely more use, and importance in an opera performed in England, than in Italy: for the public in general being ignorant of the language can receive but little amusement from the *recitative*, or narrative part, compared with that, which the airs afford them, where the beauty of the harmony, the ingenious contrivance of the several parts, and the elegance of the principal melody all conspire to charm and captivate without the assistance of poetry, fable, or even intelligence of the words: for an air well sung, speaks an *universal* language, and in proportion as the human voice is superior to every imitation, must ever afford a delight, superior to that, which the same air, played on the most perfect instrument, could produce. It is, however, too early for reflections of this kind, for in tracing the progress of the musical drama in Italy, we find that for the first fifty years, after its invention, it consisted of mere recitative, and that during half a century afterwards, it received but little assistance from melody, or *air* as it is now usually called.

IL PADRE MARC' ANTONIO CESTI, *d'Arezzo*, *Minor Conventuale e Cavalier dell' Imperatore*, set an opera for Venice, in 1649, called *Orontea*, writ-

ten by the author of *Giasona*, which was revived at Milan with the same music, in 1662: at Venice, 1666; at Bologna, 1669: and again at Venice, 1688:—always, as we are told “*colla musica stessa*” with the same music, during thirty-four years!!! It is difficult to find any of the music of the early operas—a scene however of this celebrated composition was found in the music book of SALVATOR ROSA, in that sublime painter’s own hand writing. In this opera it is supposed, that an AIR, was for the first time introduced at the termination of a scene of recitative.

About the year 1650, there were four theatres open at Venice, for operas: the principal composers were Gasparo Sartorio, Cavalli, Francesco Luzzo, and Cesti: and in 1654, *La Guerniera Spartana*, the first opera of D. Pietro Andrea Ziani appeared; who, after having composed fifteen operas for Venice, was appointed Maestro di Capella to the Emperor, for whose theatre and chapel at Vienna, he afterwards composed a considerable number of operas, and oratorios.

It is amusing to observe, how contented and even charmed the public are at one period with what appears contemptible at another—all the early operas of which any fragments have been preserved are so deficient in poetical and musical merit, compared with the generality of those in present favour, that no

perfection of performance could now render any of them palatable.

Shakespeare, and our other dramatic writers have frequently been called barbarians for introducing comic characters in their tragedies: yet the mixture of comic scenes in serious musical dramas prevailed in most of the early operas, and even in ORATORIOS! and continued to disgrace them, till banished by the better taste, and sounder judgment of APOSTOLO ZENO, and METASTASIO, who convinced the public, that such buffoonery, was unnecessary.

Almost all the operas that were performed in England, even as late as the beginning of the last century, were degraded by the admission of such characters, as not only counteract and destroy all tragic pathos, but such, as it is not easy to imagine likely to converse familiarly with the great personages of these dramas. Strange as it may appear, that usually judicious critic Addison, condescended to imitate this vicious taste in his *Rosamond*: and so late as 1736, in the serious opera of *Xerxes*, set by Handel, a facetious servant is introduced.

Between the years 1662 and 1680, nearly an hundred different operas were performed at Venice: and it is remarkable that during this period, the names of the poets, composers, and singers are seldom re-

corded in the printed copies of these dramas, though that of the MACHINIST is never omitted; whence we cannot but infer that the false taste of those times equalled that of the present day, when greater care seems to have been taken, to amuse the eye, than to delight the ear, or intellects of those, who attend these spectacles.

In 1675, we are told in the *Theatrical Annals of Venice*, that a musical drama, entitled "*La Divisione del Mondo*," written by Giulio Cesare Corradi, and set by Legrenzi, excited universal admiration by the stupendous machinery and decorations with which it was exhibited. And in 1680, the opera of BERENICE, set by Domenico Freschi, was performed at Padua in a manner so splendid, that some of the decorations, recorded in the printed copy of the piece seem worthy of notice in the history of the musical drama.

It was certainly the original intention of opera legislators to favour poetry, and make her mistress of the feast, and a considerable time elapsed before music absolutely took the lead. Dancing stepped into importance during the last century, and still maintains its ground: but early in the seventeenth, machinery and decorations were of such consequence that little thought or expence was bestowed on poetry, music, or dancing.

provided some means could be devised of exciting astonishment in the spectators, by splendid scenes, and ingenious mechanical contrivances.

In the opera of *Berenice*, just mentioned, there were chorusses of one hundred virgins, one hundred soldiers, one hundred *horsemen* in iron armour, forty cornets of horse, six trumpeters on horseback, six drummers, six ensigns, six sackbuts, six great flutes, six minstrels playing on Turkish instruments, six others on octave flutes, six pages, three serjeants, six cymbalists, twelve huntsmen, twelve grooms, six coachmen for the triumph, six others for the procession, two lions led by two Turks, *two elephants* by two others, *Berenice's* triumphal car drawn by four horses, six other cars with spoils, and prisoners, drawn by twelve horses, and six coaches for the procession. Among the scenes, and representations in the first act, was a vast plain with two triumphal arches: another with pavilions and tents; a square prepared for the entrance of the triumph; and a forest for the chase.

Act 2d.—The royal apartments of *Berenice's* Temple of Vengeance: a spacious court, with a view of the prison; and a covered way for the coaches to move in procession. Act 3d.—The royal dressing room completely furnished: stables with one hundred live horses: a portico adorned with tapestry,

and a delicious palace in perspective. In addition to all these attendants and decorations, at the end of the first act there were representations of every kind of chase; as of the wild boar, the stag, deer, and bears: and at the end of the third act, an enormous globe descends from the sky, which opening, divides itself into other globes, suspended in the air, upon one of which is the figure of Time, on the second that of Fame, on others, Honour, Nobility, Virtue, and Glory.

Had the salaries of singers been in those times equal to the present, the support of such expensive and puerile toys would have inclined the managers to inquire not only after the best, but the cheapest vocal performers, as splendid ballets compel them now to do: and it is certain, that during the seventeenth century, the distinct and characteristic charm of an opera was not the music, but the machinery.

The French established musical dramas in their court and capital during the rage for mythological representations, to which they have constantly adhered ever since: and when they are obliged to allow their musical composition and singing to be inferior to that of Italy, they comfort themselves by observing, that their opera is, at least a fine thing to see:—" *C'est au moins un beau spectacle, qu'un opera en France!*"

During the infancy of the opera, says Rousseau, its inventors trying to elude the most natural effects arising from the union of poetry and music by their imitations of human life, transported the scene into heaven and hell : and being unable to express the language and passions of men, chose rather to make divinities and dæmons sing, than heroes and shepherds. Hence magic, and every thing marvellous became the most essential parts of the lyric theatre ; and content with their superiority in these particulars, they never inquired into their propriety. To support such fantastic illusions, it was necessary to exhaust, whatever human invention could furnish most seducing, among a people whose taste for pleasure, and the fine arts was indulged and augmented by every possible degree of refinement, Theatres were erected throughout Italy, which equalled in magnitude the palaces of kings, and in elegance, the monuments of antiquity with which that country abounded. It was there, in order to ornament these theatres, that the arts of perspective, and decoration were invented. Artists of all kinds strained every nerve to display their talents. Machines the most ingenious, flights the most daring, with tempests, thunder, lightning, and all the delusions of the magic wand, were practised to fasci-

nate the eye, while innumerable voices and instruments astonished the ear.

But with so many means of surprize, the action always remained cold, and the situations uninteresting; as there was no plot or intrigue, but what was easily solved by the assistance of some divinity, the spectator, who knew the poet's power of extricating his heroes and heroines from every species of difficulty and danger, reposed such entire confidence in him, as to remain tranquil during the most perilous situations. Hence, though the apparatus was great, the effect was small; for actions out of nature have little interest, and the senses are never much affected by illusions, in which the heart has no share; so that upon the whole, it is hardly possible to fatigue an audience at a greater expence.

The spectacle, imperfect as it was, remained long the admiration of the public, who knew no better. They felicitated themselves on the discovery of so admirable a species of representation, in which a new principle was added to those of Aristotle; for wonder was here added to terror and pity. They did not observe that this apparent fertility was in reality but a sign of indigence, like the flowers blended with the corn, which render the fields so gay before harvest. It was for want of the power to move and affect that they wished to surprize; and this pretended admiration

was in fact so childish, that, like the present patrons of Timour the Tartar, Blue Beard, and such splendid puerilities, they ought to have blushed at it. A false air of magnificence, fairyism, and enchantment, imposed on the public, and inclined them to speak with respect, and even enthusiasm, of a theatre which was a disgrace to reason and good taste.

Though the authors of the first operas had hardly any other idea than to dazzle the eyes, and shut the ears, it was hardly possible for the musician not to endeavour, sometimes, to express the sentiments interspersed through the poem. The songs of nymphs, the hymns of priests, the din of war, and the screams of tortured ghosts, did not so entirely occupy these coarse dramas, but that he sometimes discovered those interesting moments when the audience were disposed to give way to feeling. And it was at length discovered, that independent of musical declamation or recitative, a peculiar movement, harmony, or melody, on some occasions, was necessary; and that music, though it had hitherto only affected the sense, was capable of reaching the heart.

Melody, which at first was only separated from poetry through necessity, availing itself of its independence, aimed at beauties purely musical: harmony furnished new resources of pathos and expression; and measure, freed from the slavery of syllable-

bles, and restraint of poetical rhythm, acquired a species of accent and cadence peculiar to itself.

Music thus acquired, by degrees, a language, expression, and imagery of its own, wholly independent of poetry. Even harmony began to speak in the symphonies without the assistance of words, and frequently sentiments were produced by the orchestra equally forcible with those of the vocal performers. Thus gradually relinquishing the wonders of fairy tales, the childishness of machinery, and the fantastical representations of personages and things, that humanity had never seen, pictures more interesting, because more true, were successfully sought in the imitations of nature.

In 1680, seven theatres for the performance of operas were open at Venice, in which nine different dramas were represented. The composers were, Legrenzi and Pallavicini; Marc' Antonio Ziani, Paggiardi, Varischino, Agostino, Sajon, and Vitali: the last five *principianti*.*

About this time music had received great improve-

* *Damira Placata*, an opera set by Marc' Antonio Ziani, was represented this year with figures of wood as large as life, and of extraordinary workmanship: "*Figure di legno di straordinario artificioso lavoro.*"

ment in Italy by the labours of Carissimi, Luigi, Cesti, and Stradella, whose productions were in favour throughout Europe.

In 168, Marzio Coriolano, the first opera of Giacomo Antonio Perti, the celebrated contrapuntist of Bologna, was performed, besides eleven others in the different theatres of Venice. From this time to the end of the century, seven or eight new operas were produced at Venice every year; during which period the following composers began to flourish. In 1684, Gius. Felice Tosi, father of the writer of a treatise on *florid song*, which was translated into English by Galliard. Tosi came to England during the reign of King William. In 1685, Domenico Gabrieli. In 1686, Carlo Fran. Polarolo, author of fifty operas for the several theatres of Venice. In 1687, Mich. Angelo Gasparini di Lucca. In 1690, ANTONIO CALDARA, afterwards Maestro di Capella at the imperial court of Vienna, and the first who set to music the matchless operas of METASTASIO.

In 1693, ANTONIO LOTTI, a celebrated Venetian contrapuntist and composer, both for the church and stage. In 1694, Tomaso Albinoni, a composer well known in England in the early part of the last century, by some light and easy concertos for violins, but better known at Venice by thirty-three

dramas, which he set to music. In 1697, ATTILIO ARIOSTI, who was afterwards an opera-composer in England; and in 1698, Marc' Ant. Bononcini, brother to GIOVANNI BONONCINI, the celebrated, but unsuccessful rival of Handel, set the opera of *Camilla, Regina de Volsci*, for Venice.

The number of operas composed during the century now under review, amounted to 658; the chief part by poets and composers, who were natives of the city and states of Venice. We shall have occasion hereafter to return to this delightful and singular spot, so fertile in musicians and musical productions, in order to speak more diffusely of the operas performed there during the last century; when not only the dramatic poetry and musical compositions were greatly superior to those of preceding times, but the performers also, whose wonderful and enchanting powers are deservedly entitled to particular notice in a history of the science of music.

Origin and Progress of the Musical Drama or Opera at Naples.

Though the comedies, tragedies, and mysteries, or *rappresentationi sacri*, without music, which appear to have been performed in this city during the

seventeenth century, are innumerable; yet there are few instances of *musical* dramas having been exhibited there previous to the beginning of the eighteenth.

Before the time of the elder Scarlatti, Naples appears to have been less fertile in eminent contrapuntists, and less diligent in the cultivation of dramatic music, than any other state in Italy; though, since that period, every court of Europe has been furnished with composers and performers of the first class from that city. But this seeming sterility may perhaps have been occasioned by the want of some such information as the *Indice di Drami* of Venice, and the *Serie Cronologica de Drammi* of Bologna, have furnished to the compiler of the general *Dramaturgia* of Lioni Allacci, augmented and continued to the year 1755; "In which, after a regular perusal and examination," says Dr. Burney, "the first musical drama performed at Naples that I have been able to find, is entitled *Amor non a legge*, composed by different masters in 1646, none of whose names are recorded."

In 1655, was performed *Il ratto di Elena*, set by Francesco Cirilli, of whose composition several dramas were exhibited about that time. In 1686, the Abate Francesco Rossi, of Apulia, set three operas for Venice, which were much admired; and in 1690

a drama, performed at Palermo, on occasion of the nuptials of Charles the Second, King of Spain, entitled, *Anarchia dell' Imperio*, had only the prologue set to music by MICH. DI VIO, the rest of the piece being declaimed.

In 1692, an opera, entitled *Gelidaura*, set by FRANCESCO LUCINDA, a Sicilian, and master of the Chapel Royal of Palermo, was performed at Venice; and ANTONIO NOVI, a Neapolitan, between the years 1703 and 1716, set six of his own dramas to music for different theatres of Italy. In 1707, ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI set two operas, *Mitridate* and *Il trionfo della Liberta* for Venice. Guiseppe Vignola composed *Deborah*, *Profetessa Guerriere*, in 1698, for Naples, which was greatly applauded.* And between that period and 1709, his name frequently occurs in the annals of the musical drama.

The most eminent Italian singers of the seventeenth century, were CORTONA, BALABINI, PISTOCCHI, BALDASSARE FERRI, celebrated by Bontempi, as the most extraordinary singer who had ever appeared; and *Francesco Grossi*, detto SIFACE, from his incomparable performance of the part of *Syphax*

* Perhaps Handel formed his celebrated oratorio of *Deborah* upon the model of this work of Vignola.

in the opera of *Mitridate*. This singer, who was admitted into the Pope's Chapel in 1675, was killed in a quarrel with his postillion, in returning from Ferrara to Modena.

The following were the most eminent female singers on the opera stage during the same period.

LA CATERINA MARTINELLI, who performed the part of *Dafne* in Gagliano's opera at Mantua in 1608, and who appears to have been frequently encored: *tutti il teatro richedesi ancora l'esquisitizza del Canto*, &c. She died the same year, at the age of eighteen, to the great regret of the Duke of Mantua, and of all Italy. And this young person, who in those days would have been excommunicated in France, had a splendid monument erected to her memory in the church of the Carmelites, by the Duke her patron, with the following inscription:

NOMEN MUNDO, DEO VIVAT ANIMA.

" Her name on earth, her soul survives with God."

LA VITTORIA ARCHILEI, celebrated by the poet Guarini, was the original performer of the part of *Euridice* in Jacobo Peri's opera. She likewise sang in *La disperazione di Fileno*, in which *recitando* she is said by the composer, Cavaliere, to have drawn tears from every hearer.

FRANCESCA CACCINI, daughter of Giulio Caccini, one of the earliest opera composers, according to Della Valle, was not only an excellent singer but composer of music, and of Latin and Italian verses. Quadrio has given an indiscriminate list of about fifty female singers, who performed on the opera stage during the seventeenth century.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLVI.

August 24th, 1813.

ON THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE SACRED MUSICAL DRAMA, OR ORATORIO.

THE first *rappresentazione*, or exhibition truly dramatic, that was performed in Italy, according to Apostolo Zeno, was a *Spiritual Comedy* at Padua in 1243. Another *Representation of the Mysteries of the Passion of Christ*, &c. according to Muratori, was exhibited at Friuli in 1298. In 1264, the *Compagnia del Gonfalone* was instituted at Rome, the statutes of which were printed in that city in 1554.

Their principal employment was to act, or represent the sufferings of our Lord, in Passion Week.

According to Crescimbeni and others, la rappresentazione sacra teatrale originated in Tuscany.

Tiraboschi claims the origin and invention of every species of drama for the Italians. But the ingenious and agreeable author of the *Biographia Dramatica* or *Companion to the Play-House*, (See Intro. p. 9.) observes, that “ those who imagine the English to “ have been later in the cultivation of the drama than “ their neighbours, will perhaps wonder to hear of “ theatrical entertainments almost as early as the “ Conquest: and yet nothing is more certain, if we “ may believe an honest monk, one William Stephanides, or Fitz-Stephen, in his *Descriptio Nobilissima Civitatis Londinae*, who writes thus, “ London, instead of common interludes belonging “ to the theatre, has plays of a more holy subject: “ representations of those miracles which the confessors wrought, or of the sufferings wherein the “ glorious constancy of the martyrs appeared. This “ author was a monk of Canterbury, who wrote in “ the reign of Henry the Second, and died in that “ of Richard the First in 1191: and as he does not “ mention these representations as novelties to the “ people, for he is describing all the common diver-

“sions in use at that time, we can hardly fix them
“lower than the Conquest ; and this we believe is an
“earlier date than any other nation of Europe can
“produce, for their theatrical representations.”

LE CHANT ROYAL was invented in France about 1380 : it consisted of verses to the Virgin and Saints,
“sung in chorus by troops or companies of pilgrims,
“returning from the holy sepulchre.

There were mysteries represented in Germany in 1322 ; and in the same century, in 1378, the ecclesiastics and scholars of St. Paul's School exhibited similar performances in England.

But though every nation in Europe seems, in the first attempts at dramatic exhibitions, to have had recourse to religious subjects, and an ORATORIO, or sacred drama, is but a mystery or morality in music, yet those that were written before the seventeenth century seem never to have been entirely sung, but chiefly declaimed, with incidental airs and choruses.*

* The late reverend and learned Dr. Croft, and the Honourable Topham Beauclerk, collected a great number of these religious poems, or mysteries, in Italian. Dr. Burney says, that at the sale of their libraries, he procured many of the most ancient, in order to trace the

Gio Battista Doni*, speaking of oratorios, says, that by a *spiritual representation*, he does not mean that gross, vulgar, and legendary kind of drama, used by the nuns and monks in convents, which deserves not the name of poetry; but such elegant and well-constructed fables as that of St. Alexis, by the ingenious Giulio Rospigliosi, many times performed, and always received with unbounded applause.

This famous oratorio, which is omitted in the *Drammaturgie*, though printed in score, in folio, in 1664, was set to music by Stefano Landi, of the Papal Chapel, and performed at the Barberini Palace at Rome, on a stage, and in action, with dances,

origin of the sacred musical drama. Some of them, from the gross manner in which the subjects are treated, the coarseness of the dialogue, and the ridiculous situations in which the most sacred persons and things are placed, seem, though printed soon after the invention of the press, to be much more ancient than that discovery.

* *Trattato della musica scenica*, c. 6. p. 15. Op. omn. Tom. II. *S. Giovanni, e Paolo*, one of the collection, was written by Lorenzo il Magnifico; and *Santa Demitilla*, and *Santa Guglielma*, by Antonia, wife of the poet Pulci, in the fifteenth century.

machinery, and every species of dramatic decoration, of which a splendid account is given in the preface prefixed to the work.

The Abbé Arnaud, in his *Essai sur le Theatre Anglois*, says, that the fathers of the church, in the first ages of Christianity, indulging the passion of the people for public spectacles, opposed religious dramas, built on the sacred writings, to the profane representations which had been long used by the Pagans.

At the revival of theatrical amusements, when the reformers began to disseminate their doctrines throughout Europe, religious plays were made the vehicles of opinion, both by the Catholics and Protestants; and there are Latin dramas of this kind, as well as others in modern languages, extant, which might with propriety be called oratorios. At the beginning of the Reformation in England it was so common for the advocates of the old and new doctrines, to avail themselves of plays, composed on Scriptural subjects, in which they mutually censured, and anathematized each other, that an act of Parliament passed in the twenty-fourth year of Henry the Eighth, to prohibit the acting or singing any thing in these interludes contrary to the established religion. It appears, however, in Collier's History of the Re-

formation, that subsequent to this period, the mysteries of the Roman Catholic religion were ridiculed by the Protestants on a stage in churches.

It is related by Cardan, in his *Eloge* of our young king, Edward the Sixth, that he had written a most elegant comedy, called, *The Whore of Babylon!* The number of comedies, and tragi-comedies, written about this time is incredible, and they are said to have been even more extravagant and gross than numerous. One is intitled, *Jesus the True Messiah*, a comedy: another, *The new German Ass of Balaam: The Calvinistical Postilion: The Christian Cavalier of Eisleben*, a delectable, spiritual comedy, including the History of Luther, and his two greatest enemies, the Pope and Calvin.

The Conversion of St. Paul, performed at Rome, in 1440, as described by Sulpicius, has been erroneously called the *first opera*, or musical drama. *Abram, e Isaac, suo figliuolo*, a sacred drama (*azione sacra*) "shewing how Abraham was commanded by " God to sacrifice his son Isaac on the mountain," was performed in the church of St. Mary Magdeline, at Florence, in 1449. Another, called, *Abraham and Sarah*, "containing the good life of their " son Isaac, and the bad conduct of Ishmael, the " son of his handmaid, and how they were turned " out of the house," was printed in 1556. *Abel e*

Caino, and *Sampson*, in 1554: *The Prodigal Son*, in 1565: and *La Comedia Spirituale dell' Anima*,—"The Spiritual Comedy of the Soul,"—printed at Sienna, but without date; in which there are nearly thirty personifications, exclusive of St. Paul, St. John Chrysostom, two little boys, who repeat a kind of prelude, and the announcing angel, who always speaks the prologue in these old mysteries. He is called, "*L' Angelo che nunzia*," and his figure is almost always given in a wooden cut on the title page of printed copies. Here, among the interlocutors, we have God the Father, Michael, the archangel, a Chorus of Angels, the Human Soul, with her Guardian Angel, Memory, Intellect, Free-Will, Faith, Hope, Charity, Reason, Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude, Justice, Mercy, Poverty, Patience, and Humility: together with Hatred, Infidelity, Despair, a Chorus of Dæmons, and the Devil!!!

None of these mysteries are totally without music, as there are choruses, and *laudi*, or hymns, that are sung in them all; and sometimes instrumental music between the acts. In a play, written by Damiano, and printed at Sienna, in 1519, according to Crescimbeni, at the beginning of every act, there was an octave stanza, which was sung to the sound of a lyra-viol, by a personage called Orpheus, who was solely retained for that purpose: at other times

a madrigal was sung between the acts, after the manner of a chorus.

It was, however, by small degrees, that *entire musical mysteries* had admission into the church, and were improved into ORATORIOS. All the Italian writers on the subject agree, that these sacred, musical dramas originated in the time of SAN FELIPPO NERI, who was born in 1515: and founded the congregation of the PRIESTS of the ORATORY, at Rome, in 1540.

This Saint, who died in 1595, is numbered among Italian *improvisatori*, by Quadrio, tom. i. p. 163.—He was originally intended for a merchant, but was drawn from commercial pursuits by *vocation*. *Oratorio*, in Italian, implies a small chapel, or particular part of a house, or church, where there is an altar. The spaces between the arches of Romish churches are called, *oratorii*, in English, *chapels*. The congregation of the Oratory, established at Rome, and in some other cities of Italy, by St. Phil. Neri, about 1558, originated in the conferences which this pious ecclesiastic held in his own chamber at Rome. The great number of persons who attended these meetings obliged St. Philip to request from the administrators of the church of San Girolamo della Carità, permission to hold those assemblies there, which was granted. In 1574, they were transferred to the

church of the Florentines, and in 1583, to that of Santa Maria della Vallicella. By degrees, this establishment spread itself all over Italy, where it has still, or at least till very lately, had many houses. The members are not bound by any vow : and it appears that these fathers, wherever they have established themselves, have always entertained their congregations with excellent music.

During the service, and after the sermon, it was usual for the Saint, among other pious exercises, in order to draw youth to church, and keep them from secular amusements, to have hymns, psalms, and other spiritual songs, sung either in chorus, or by a favourite single voice, divided into two parts, the one performed before the sermon, the other after it.

But though this devout practice was begun in so simple a manner, with only spiritual cantatas, or songs on moral subjects : in order to render the service still more attractive, some sacred story from Scripture was written in verse, and set by the best poets and musicians of the times. These being composed in dialogue, and rendered interesting to the congregation, such curiosity was excited by the performance of the first part, that there was no danger, that during the sermon, any of the congregation would retire, before they had heard the second. The subjects of these pieces were sometimes the

Good Samaritan : sometimes Job and his Friends ; the Prodigal Son, &c. These, by the united excellencies of the composition, and the performance, brought this *oratory* into such repute, that the congregation became daily more and more numerous. And hence this species of sacred musical drama, wherever performed, in process of time obtained the general appellation of ORATORIO.

In the church of *San Girolamo della Carità*, at Rome, oratorios are still constantly performed on Sundays and festivals, from All Saints Day till Palm Sunday ; as well as in the church of *La Vallicella*, or *La Chiesa Nuova*, where they are likewise performed from the first of November till Easter : *Oratorj in Musica, e sermoni*, every evening on all festivals.

These are the two churches in which such spiritual spectacles originated ; but the practice has since been so much extended to the other churches of Rome, that there is scarcely a day in the year, on which one or more of these performances may not be heard. And as lists of oratorios, and other *funzioni* to be performed in the several churches in the course of the year, are published, like our lists of Lent preachers, great emulation is excited in the directors and performers, and equal curiosity in the public.

The first collection of the words of the hymns

and psalms, sung in the chapel of San Filippo Neri was published at Rome, in 1585, under the title of *Laudi Spirituali stampate ad Istanza de' R. R. P. P. della Congregatione dell' ORATORIO.*

The first oratorio was entitled, "*Rappresentazione di Anima, e di Corpo.*" It was composed by Emilio del Cavaliere, and was performed and printed at Rome in 1600. It was represented in action on a stage, in the church of La Vallicella, with scenes, decorations, and chorus, à l'antique, and analogous *dances*, as appears both from the editor's dedication to Cardinal Aldobrandini, and from the composer's instruction for the performance.

Emilio del Cavaliere, as well as the rest of the early composers of dramatic music, imagined that he had recovered, in his *recitative*, that style of music which the ancient Greeks and Romans used in their theatres. And a singer of such music is required by Cavaliere to have a fine voice, perfectly in tune, and free from all defects in his delivery; together with a pathetic expression, the power of swelling, and diminishing the tones, and an equal respect for the composer and poet, in singing plain, and being particularly attentive to the articulation and expression of the words.

It is recommended to place the instruments of accompaniment behind the scenes, which, in the first oratorio, were the following.

Una lira doppia A double lyre, perhaps
a viol da gamba.

Un clavicembalo A harpsichord.

Un chitarone A large, or double guitar.

Dui flauti, o vero dui }
Tibri all' antica . . . } Two common flutes.

No *violin* is mentioned here; but what excites the most surprise at present, in these instructions for the performance of an oratorio on a stage in a church, are the directions for the *dances*.

There are, however, examples of religious dances in the sacred writings, as well as in the history of almost every ancient people, in which their religious ceremonies are mentioned. Most of these dances are performed to the music of choruses, which are singing at the same time, in the manner of those in the old French operas.

On many occasions, it is recommended for the actors to have instruments in their hands, as the playing, or appearing to play upon them, would assist illusion more than a visible orchestra.

Besides these general rules, for such as might wish to write, or bring on the stage other poems of the same kind, Cavaliere gives the following instructions for the representation of this particular species of musical drama.

1. The words should be printed with the verses correctly arranged, the scenes numbered, and the characters of the interlocutors specified.

2. Instead of the *overture*, or symphony, to modern musical dramas, a madrigal is recommended as a full piece, with all the voice parts doubled, and a great number of instruments.

3. When the curtain rises, two youths, who recite the prologue, appear on the stage, and when they have finished, *Time*, one of the characters in this *morality*, comes on, and has the note, on which he is to begin, given him by the instrumental performers behind the scenes.

4. The *chorus* are to have a place allotted them on the stage, part sitting, and part standing, in sight of the principal characters. And when they sing, they are to rise, and be in motion with appropriate gestures.

5. *Pleasure*, another imaginary character, with two companions, are to have instruments in their hands, on which they are to play, while they sing, and perform the *ritornals*.

6. *Il Corpo*, the body, when these words are uttered, "*Si che hormai alma mea,*" &c. may throw away some of his ornaments; as his gold collar, feather from his hat, &c.

7. The *World* and *Human Life*, in particular,

are to be very gaily dressed; and when they are divested of their trappings, to appear very poor and wretched, and at length dead carcases.

8. The symphonies and ritornels may be played by a great number of instruments; and if "*a violin*" should play the principal part, it would have a "very good effect."*

9. The performance may be finished with or without a dance. If without, the last chorus is to be doubled in all its parts, vocal and instrumental: but if a dance is preferred, a verse beginning thus, "*Chiostrì altissimi, e stellati,*" is to be sung, accompanied sedately and reverentially by the dance. These shall succeed other grave steps and figures of the solemn kind. During the ritornels, the four principal dancers are to perform a ballet, *saltato, con capriole*, "enlivened with capers, or entrechats," without singing. And thus, after each stanza, always varying the steps of the dance; and the four principal dancers may sometimes use the *galiard*, sometimes the *canary*, and sometimes the *courant* step, which will do very well in the ritornels.

* Un violino sonando il soprano per l'apunto, farà bellissimo effetto.

10. The stanzas of the ballet, are to be sung and played by all the performers within and without.

These curious and minute instructions, will convey to the reader an idea of the manner in which the oratorio was performed in its infant state.

The word *aria*, air, never occurs in this oratorio; but though there are fewer recitatives, and more choruses in it, than in the first operas, the choruses are all in plain counterpoint, without a single attempt at fugue or imitation; and consequently the words are more intelligible, and free from confusion, than in an air for a single voice loaded with accompaniments.

No musical drama, under the title of *oratorio*, can be found in print, says the diligent Quadrio, before the time of Francesco Balducci, who died in 1642: among whose poems are found two, the one called *La Fede*, on the subject of Abraham's sacrifice, and divided into two parts; the other intitled *Il Trionfo*, or the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin, in one act only. These, as resembling the dramas performed at the church of the Fathers of the *Oratory*, he calls ORATORIOS; an appellation which was soon adopted by many others. And in 1662, several religious dramas were performed in Italian, in the imperial chapel at Vienna, called *oratorios*.

We shall now endeavour to enliven the history of

this species of sacred music, which we are aware will be considered somewhat dull, with the following account of a composer in this line, who was not only infinitely superior to all his predecessors, but whose professional merit almost worked a miracle in his favour, by softening the heart of an Italian assassin.

ALESSANDRO STRADELLA, of Naples, was not only an excellent composer, but also eminent as a performer on the violin; and in addition to these qualifications, possessed a fine voice, and an exquisite taste in singing. His compositions, which are all vocal, are perhaps superior to any that were produced in the seventeenth century, with the single exception of the works of *Carissimi*: and, perhaps, had he enjoyed equal longevity, he might have rivalled even that wonderful musician. Stradella, probably at a very early period of his life, having acquired great reputation by his talents, was employed by a noble Venetian to teach a young lady, of a noble Roman family, named *Hortensia*, to sing. *Hortensia*, on whom nature had bestowed a beautiful person, and an exquisite voice, notwithstanding her illustrious birth, having been seduced from her friends, had submitted to live with this Venetian in a criminal manner.

Her delight in music, and admiration of the talents of her instructor, soon gave birth to a passion of a

different kind; and, like Heloisa, she found that though at first

- “ Guiltless she gaz’d, and listen’d while he sung,
- “ While science flow’d seraphic from his tongue;
- “ From lips like his the precepts too much move,
- “ They music taught—but more, alas ! to love !”

By frequent access, Hortensia and her master became mutually enamoured of each other. Before their attachment was discovered, they agreed to quit Venice together, and fly to Naples. After travelling in the most secret manner, they arrived at Rome in their way to that city. The Venetian seducer, enraged at their escape, determined to satiate his revenge in having them assassinated, in whatever part of the world they could be found; and for this purpose, engaged two desperate ruffians, by a large sum of ready money, and a promise of a still greater reward, when the work should be accomplished. The assassins proceeded directly to Naples, the place of Stradella’s nativity, supposing that he would naturally return thither for an asylum, in preference to any other part of Italy. After many fruitless researches in that city, they were at length informed, that Stradella and the lady resided at Rome, where she was regarded as his wife.

Of this they conveyed intelligence to their employer, assuring him of their determination to go through with the business they had undertaken, provided he would procure them letters of recommendation to the Venetian ambassador at Rome, to grant them an asylum as soon as the deed should be perpetrated. After waiting at Naples for the necessary letters and instructions, they proceeded to Rome, where, such was the celebrity of Stradella, that they very shortly discovered his residence.

But hearing that he was soon to conduct an oratorio of his own composition, in the church of St. John Lateran, in which he was not only to play, but to sing the principal part; and as this performance was to begin at five o'clock in the evening, they determined to avail themselves of the darkness of the night, when he and his mistress should return home.

On their arrival at the church, the oratorio was begun, and the excellence of the music and its performance, joined to the rapture that was expressed by the whole congregation, made an impression, and softened the *rocky* hearts even of these human savages, to such a degree, as to incline them to relent, and to spare the life of a man, whose genius and abilities were the delight of all Italy. Here we have an instance of the *miraculous powers* of modern

music, superior to any that could be well authenticated of the *ancient* ; and which may fairly lead us to conclude, that the fabulous stories of Orpheus, Amphion, &c. were but exaggerations of matters of fact, well known in those days, but which have not descended to posterity.

Both these assassins being equally affected by the performance, and alike inclined to mercy, accosted him in the street, when he quitted the church. After complimenting him on his oratorio, they confessed the business on which they had been sent by the Venetian nobleman, whose mistress he had taken away : adding, that charmed by his music, they had abandoned their purpose, and determined to relinquish the rest of the reward that had been promised them ; and to tell their employer, that Stradella and his mistress had quitted Rome, the night before their arrival in that city.

After this providential escape, the lovers set out that very night for Turin, as a place most remote from their implacable enemy and his emissaries. And the assassins, returning to Venice, told the enraged Venetian, that they had traced the fugitives to Turin, where the laws being not only more severe, but the difficulty of escaping so much greater, than in any other part of Italy, on account of the garrison, they should decline any further concern in the busi-

ness. This intelligence did not, however, incline the exasperated nobleman to relinquish his purpose, but rather stimulated him to new attempts. He therefore engaged two other assassins in his service, procuring for them letters of recommendation from the Abbe d'Estrade, at that time the French ambassador at Venice, addressed to the Marquis de Villars, ambassador from France to Turin. The Abbé d'Estrade requesting, at the desire of the Venetian ambassador, protection for two merchants, who intended to reside some time in that city, which being delivered by these new assassins, they paid their court regularly to the ambassador, waiting for a favourable opportunity to accomplish their undertaking with safety.

The Duchess of Savoy, at that time regent, having been informed of the sudden flight of Stradella and Hortensia from Rome, and of their arrival at Turin; and knowing the danger they were in from the vindictive spirit of their enemy, placed the lady in a convent, and retained Stradella in her palace, as her Maestro di Capella.

In a situation apparently so secure, Stradella's fears for his safety began to abate; till one day, at six o'clock in the evening, as he was walking for the air on the ramparts of the city, he was attacked by two ruffians, who each gave him a stab in the breast

with a dagger, and immediately escaped to the house of the French ambassador, as to a sanctuary.

The assault having been witnessed by numbers of people, who were walking in the same place, occasioned such an uproar in the city, that the news soon reached the Duchess, who instantly ordered the gates to be shut, and the assassins to be demanded of the French ambassador: but he, insisting on the privileges granted to men of his function by the law of nations, refused to give them up.

This transaction, however, made a great noise all over Italy; and M. de Villars, wrote immediately to the Abbé d'Estrade, to know the reason of the attack upon Stradella, by the two men whom he had recommended; and was informed by the Abbé, that he had been surprised into a recommendation of these assassins, by one of the most powerful of the Venetian nobility.

In the mean while Stradella's wounds, though extremely dangerous, proved not to be mortal; and the Marquis de Villars having been informed by the surgeons that he would recover, in order to prevent any further dispute about the privileges of the *corps diplomatique*, suffered the assassins to escape. But, so invincible was the implacability of the enraged Venetian, that never relinquishing his purpose, he continued to maintain spies at Turin, to watch the

motions of Stradella. A year having elapsed after the cure of his wounds, he fancied himself secure from any further attempts upon his life. The Duchess Regent, interesting herself in the happiness of two persons, who had suffered so much, and who seemed born for each other, had the ceremony of their marriage performed in her own palace. After which, Stradella being invited to Genoa, to compose an opera that for city, went thither with his wife, determining to return to Turin during the carnival; but the Venetian, being informed of this change of residence, sent assassins after them, who rushed into their chamber early one morning, and stabbed them both to the heart. The murderers having secured a bark which lay in the port, by instantly retreating to it, escaped from justice, and were never afterwards heard of.

Dr. Burney, in his History of Music, has given a very minute account of the oratorio of Stradella, which is generally believed to have saved the life of its excellent composer. The title of this production, a copy of which in score, the Doctor informs us is in his possession, is "*Oratorio di S. Giovanni Battista à 5, con stromenti, del Signor Alessandro Stradella.*"

Dr. Burney speaks most favourably of this composition, which in his opinion "rises in merit, the

“ further we advance. The recitative in general is
“ excellent; and there is scarcely a movement among
“ the airs, in which genius, skill, and study, do not
“ appear.”

The more we examine the works of this excellent musician, the more we are convinced that our PURCELL made him his model; not by a servile imitation of his passages, but in the general style of of his compositions. Purcell was extremely fond of writing upon a *ground-bass*, a species of *chacone*, which the Italians call *basso costretto*, and the French, *basse-contrainte*; and in Stradella's oratorio, it appears that more than half the airs in that admirable production are built upon a few bars, or bass notes, perpetually repeated. Purcell may have been stimulated to exercise his powers in such confined and difficult enterprises as Themes, by studying the works of an author, who, according to tradition, was his greatest favourite: but he has never made use of the *same* ground, or series of notes, in any of his numerous compositions of this description; and, indeed, his subjects are not only new, but even more pleasing and difficult to work upon, than any of Stradella's.

Besides the legendary subjects, which the lives of saints have furnished, there is scarcely an event in the Sacred Writings, which during the seventeenth

century, did not give birth to an oratorio. And so inexhaustible was the taste for this species of drama in Italy during that period, that even the histories of Thomas à Becket, Sir Thomas More, and Mary, Queen of Scots, severally furnished materials for similar representations.

“ In the first parabolical oratorios,” says Quadrio, “ allegorical and ideal personages were introduced, “ as Patience, Faith, Hope, Charity, &c. in the “ same manner as in the ancient mysteries: and “ sometimes, a mixture of real and imaginary characters: when our blessed Saviour, the Holy “ Ghost, and even God the Father, were introduced “ speaking the language of mortals, and singing “ trivial and profane airs!!! This irreverent abuse “ has, however, been reformed during the present “ century, in which oratorios have been written, “ that are not indeed perfectly dramatic, but in “ which the interlocutors are real personages, who “ are made to speak with more reason, probability, “ and propriety, than formerly.”*

In Italy at the present day, oratorios are usually divided into two parts only, in order that their performance may not exceed two hours; for as they are

* See Storea d'Ogni Poesia, tom. v. p. 498.

performed during divine service, more time cannot conveniently be allowed. Malatesta Strinati, and Giulio Cesare Grazzini, both men of literary abilities, have, however, printed oratorios; the first, St. Adrian, in three acts; and the second, St. George, in five.

APOSTOLO ZENO has reduced his sacred dramas within the limits of time and place; and written them in such a manner, that they may not only be sung without action, but represented on a stage: so that if they were lengthened, and the several parts well cast, they might justly be called *sacred musical tragedies*.

And such, oratorios ought to be, even when sung in still life; for when the laws of time and place are observed, the events of the piece interesting, and the characters well supported, the attention of the audience will be the more easily excited. As these dramas are at present performed without action, the figures of the supposed personages are not presented to the eye but to the ear.

In the dramatic works of Apostolo Zeno, there are seventeen oratorios, all of which were originally set to music by CALDARA, except two; *David*, by Porsile; and *Ezechia*, by JOHN BONONCINI, in 1737.

Zeno's oratorio of *Sisara*, set by Caldara, was

performed in the imperial chapel in 1719. And the author himself says, that for the great favour with which this drama was honoured at Vienna, he was chiefly indebted to the composer of the music, "*che mi ha servitò assai bene.*"*

This testimony must have been very flattering to Caldara, as Apostolo Zeno, in general, joins with other learned Italians in complaints of the degeneracy and abuse of music.

METASTASIO was author of eight sacred dramas, which have been set by the greatest masters of modern times, but with more force and learning, perhaps, by Jomelli than by any other; as he particularly studied an elaborate choral style; and his long residence in Germany, obliged him to a constant exercise in learned counterpoint, for which, though unjustly censured by his countrymen, he has acquired great and deserved reputation among the lovers of harmony elsewhere. Metastasio's celebrated oratorio of Sant' Elena al Calvario, was admirably set by Leo. His music to "*Sacri Orrori*," is in a truly sublime style, and perhaps equal in solemnity and effects to any thing of the kind that has ever been produced.

* Littera 41, tom. 2.

This composition was greatly admired, and first brought to England, by our Poet Gray.*

The most ancient oratorio, next to those already mentioned, which Dr. Burney was able to find was, *Il Trionfo della Castità*, dedicated to Cardinal Ottoboni, and set to music by Carlo Pallavicini. There were two composers of this name, the elder was a voluminous madrigalist about the beginning of the seventeenth century. There is no great variety of style, melody, harmony, or modulation, discoverable in any of their productions.

The next oratorio, of which the above-mentioned diligent inquirer, was able to find the music, is entitled "*Maria Virgine addolerata*," composed by

* Metastasio's sacred dramas were produced in the following order, *La passione di Giesu Christo*, was first set to music by Caldara, in 1730. *Sant' Elena al Calvario*, 1733. *Guiseppo riconosciuto*, musica di Porsilo, 1733. *Betulia liberata*, 1734, musica di Giorgio Renter. *Gious*, 1737. *La Morte d'Abel*, 1740, musica di D. Domenico Valentini. *Per la festività del Santissimo Natale*. *Isacco, Figura del Redentore*, 1740, musica di Predieri.

Betulia liberata, *Isacco*, and *La Passione* have been since, remarkably well set by Jomelli.

FRANCESCO ANTONIO PISTOCCHI, of Bologna, one of the most eminent public singers of the seventeenth century, who began to flourish both as a composer and vocal performer, about the year 1679. He was retained some time at the court of the Margrave of Brandenburg, as *Maestro di Capella*: but late in life, as we have observed in a former letter, after establishing a school of singing at Bologna, which was continued by his scholar *Bernacchi*, he retired to a monastery, where he ended his days.

There is no date to his oratorio, but by the elegance, and simplicity of the style, it seems to have been produced towards the conclusion of the seventeenth century. Recitative now freed from formal closes, and in possession of its true beauties, is in this production extremely pathetic, and dramatic: *Pistocchi* shines as a more correct contrapuntist, than the generality of opera singers, whom the *dæmon* of composition seizes at a period of their lives, when it is too late to begin, and impossible to pursue such studies effectually, without injuring the chest, and neglecting the cultivation of the voice.

This oratorio has neither overture nor chorus; the interlocutors are an Angel, the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalen, and St. John.

In the specimen, of this author's style, inserted by *Dr. Burney* in his *History*, a passage occurs, which

Corelli, in the saraband of his eleventh concerto, and Gemincani, in the well known air of "*Gently touch the warbling Lyre*," have used, without ceremony, as their own property.

At the termination of this oratorio, which is truly pathetic and solemn, all the degrees of the diminution of sound are used: as *piano*, *piu piano*, *pianissimo*: equivalent to the *diminuendo*, *calando*, and *smorzando* of the present times.

JOHN BONONCINI composed many oratorios, before he arrived in England. There is one in the archives of S. Girolamo della Carita, at Rome, with his name to it, which by its simplicity, seems to have been one of his earliest productions. In the Symphonies great use is made of the violoncello, which was his instrument. Like the generality of Italian oratorios, it is divided into two acts.

The overture has but two movements, like those of Lulli. Handel seems to have been the first, who introduced the minuet, or final air.

Though there were frequently in the first oratorios, short choruses in plain counterpoint: yet we can seldom find any in those of the latter end of the seventeenth, and the beginning of the eighteenth century; each act usually ending with a duet: so that we may consider ourselves indebted to Handel, not only for the best choruses that ever were composed, ac-

accompanied by instruments, but for having any choruses at all.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLVII.

August 28, 1813.

OF THE OPERA BUFFA, OR COMIC OPERA,
AND INTERMEZZI, OR MUSICAL INTERLUDES
DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

WHEN, and where the first legitimate opera Buffa, *in stilo recitativo*, was performed, we have not been able to ascertain. There was a mixture of comic characters in all the musical dramas of the seventeenth century: however, in 1641, soon after the introduction of serious operas upon the Venetian stage, we find the comic opera of *La Finta passa*, written by Claudio Strozzi, and set by Saccati; and *La Ninfa avara*, written and set to music by Benedetto Ferrari, among the musical dramas of that

year. And among those performed at Rome and Bologna, at the same time, though it is not easy to procure the music, yet the words have been preserved in many collections of poems. The celebrated operas of *Orontea* and *Erismena*, the former set by Cesti, in 1649, and the latter by Cavalli, in 1655, were both tragi-comedies. But at that time, *AIR*, which was scarcely separated from recitative, had not two distinct characters, as at present, for serious and comic purposes: and the subjects of comic operas in those days were seldom so farcical, as those of modern burlettas, and were therefore less likely to suggest such gay, grotesque, and frolicsome measures.

Indeed we learn but little of the burletta music of Italy, till the comic operas of *Latilla*, *Ciampi*, and *GALUPPI*, were performed on our own stage, of which we shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

Intermedii, or Intermezzi.

Short pieces, called *Intermezzi in Musica*, preceded operas in air and recitative about fifty years. Quadrio says, that these were at first only madrigals and canzonets; and adds, that in later times, recourse was had to *intermedii* or *madriale*, between the

acts of a play or opera, chiefly when the principal piece was feeble, or the performance not of the first class.

In a book entitled *Descrizione degl' Intermedii*, on occasion of the arrival of the Arch-Duke of Austria at Florence, in 1569, composed by the "most learned and ingenious Alessandro Striggio, " *nobilissimo gentiluomo*," as he is called in the preface, these Intermezzi, are mere madrigals.*

Intermezzi were written for the *Aminta* of Tasso, and printed with several editions of that celebrated pastoral : as were those written by Guarini himself for his *Pastor fido*. These, however, were merely simple madrigals. The public being soon tired of these eventless and inactive choruses, more animated scenes of humour and character, were substituted in their stead. Yet these do not appear to have been absolutely confined to subjects of low humour and buffoonery : in 1643, *L' Amorosso Innocenza* a tragic-comic pastoral was acted at Bologna, *con gl'*

* Alessandro Striggio's compositions were in great favour in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth : and his works are frequently cited by Morley in his Introduction.

intermezzi della coronazione di Apollo, per Dafne convertita in Laura, written by the author of the piece. The music of the intermezzi was composed by Ottaviano Vernizzi, organist of the church of S. Petronio, in the same city.

Buffoon intermezzi were, however, in high favour during the early part of the last century. What they were at Venice about the year 1721, is very well described by Mr. Wright, who was a good judge of music.*

“ The intermezzi, or intermediate performances,
 “ which they have in some of their smaller theatres
 “ between the acts, are very comical in their way
 “ which is somewhat low, not much unlike the
 “ farces we see sometimes on our stage. They
 “ laugh, scold, imitate other sounds, as the crack-
 “ ing of a whip, the rumbling of chariot wheels, and
 “ all to music. These intermezzi are in *recitative*,
 “ and sung, like the operas. But such entertain-
 “ ments, between the acts of an opera, similar in
 “ the manner, but different in subject, seem to in-
 “ terrupt the unity of the piece itself; and if they will
 “ have such mirth excited, it should seem better at
 “ the end of the performance, as the *petite piece* in

* Travels into Italy, Vol. I. printed 1730.

“ France, and the farce with us, after a serious
“ drama.”

A collection of these scenes, or little dramas, was published at Amsterdam in two volumes, in 1723, at which time few operas would go down without this coarse sauce. Their favour continued increasing in Italy for more than ten years after this period; for in 1732, we find *Pertici* and *Jozzi* employed at Rome to sing in the intermezzi of the operas of *Berenice* and *Cajo Fabrizio*, set by *Sarro* and *Hasse*: and about the year 1734, was first performed at Naples, the celebrated intermezzo of *LA SERVA PADRONA*, set by *PERGOLESI*, which, sixteen years after, made so many converts to Italian music in France, and gave birth to Rousseau's excellent *Lettre sur la Musique Française*, and to disputes which perhaps are not yet ended.

Yet this charming music, which all the rest of Europe so greatly admired, was so little noticed in Italy during its first performance, that even the name of the *Serva Padrona*, as an intermezzo, set by the celebrated Pergolesi, is not to be found in the last edition of the *Drammaturgia accresciuta e continuata fino al l'anno 1755!!!*

It appears, notwithstanding that Pergolesi's success in this little musical entertainment has been the

despair of all his brethren; for we hear of no more *Intermezzi* subsequent to the year 1734; about which time, these interludes seem to have been superseded in favour of DANCING, and, indeed, of good taste, to which these farces, however comic the words, and ingeniously set, acted, and sung, must have been always offensive. Rousseau has justly observed, that when the action of a drama is interrupted, either by an intermezzo, a dance, or any other amusement foreign to the principal subject of the piece, the interest excited in the audience is entirely annihilated. For this reason (says he) the Italians have at length banished comic intermezzi from their opera; for, however agreeable, piquant, and natural, such spectacles may be in themselves, they are so ill placed in the middle of a tragic action, that the two pieces mutually defeat the author's intention, as by this tasteless and absurd arrangement, the one can only interest at the expense of the other.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLVIII.

August 31st, 1813.

CANTATAS, OR NARRATIVE CHAMBER MUSIC.

CANTATAS were first suggested by the musical recitation of the opera, in which the principal events were related in recitative. During the seventeenth century, they underwent several progressive changes, previous to the attainment of that perfection to which they at length arrived.

Originally, like opera scenes, they consisted of little more than recitative; with frequent formal closes, at which the singer, either accompanied by himself, or another performer on a single instrument, was left at liberty to display his taste and talents.

The first change was in having a single air, generally in triple time, distinct from the recitative, and repeated to different stanzas, after each narrative part of the poem, like modern ballad airs. At this time, the term "Da Capo" not being yet in use, the air was written over again and again, as often as it was repeated; sometimes in exactly the same notes, but more frequently with little changes and embellishments to the same bass.

It has been observed, that madrigals for voices alone, and afterwards for instruments in unison with the several parts, constituted the chief music that was performed in the chamber and in private concerts, till *solo* songs, accompanied by a single instrument, were brought into favour by Caccini, and his imitators, in Italy and other parts of Europe.

The word CANTATA, according to Du Cange, was used in the church as early as the year 1314, to express what we at present mean by anthem, with which it is still synonymous in Germany: being chiefly confined in the Lutheran church to sacred music.

The Romish church had many admirable *sacred* cantatas, during the seventeenth century, by Carissimi, Graziani, Bassani, and others. And during the last century, Domenico Scarlatti set one at Rome for Christmas Eve, which was performed in the Apostolic Palace, in 1717. Bononcini set another for the same festival and place, in 1729.

The secular cantata is a species of composition extremely well suited to the chamber, in which fewer parts, and less light and shade are necessary, than in ecclesiastic, or dramatic music: for the performance being in still life, and the poet and musician, unassisted by an orchestra, or choir, in painting the stronger passions, composers aimed at no effects be-

yond the power of a single voice, and a single instrument to produce.

Cantatas of considerable length, accompanied by a numerous band, are usually performed in Italy on great occasions and festivals; as at the reconciliation of princes after long disunion, or on the arrival of great personages in the capital of a state. Thus, when Pope Ganganeli, and the king of Portugal were reconciled in 1770: and soon after, when the Emperor of Germany arrived at Venice, on his first visit to Italy, cantatas were sung at Rome and Venice, equal in length to an opera. But these occasional productions differ essentially from what is usually meant by a cantata, or monologue for a *single* voice, consisting of short recitatives, and two or three airs at most, as *several* singers are employed in these compositions, which, though in dialogue, are performed like oratorios, without change of scene or action.

Such languid and whining recitative as that of Emilio del Cavaliere, Jacopo Peri, and Caccini, is now only fit for the serious French opera, where it has been continued from the time it was first brought to Paris by Lulli, to the death of Rameau, and by his disciples and admirers to the present time. At first it was not sufficiently distinguished from *air* in Italy, if anything then might be called *air*;

but it would perhaps be more accurate to say, that recitative then admitted *too much singing*, too many long notes, and formal closes, for dialogue and narration. Monteverde accelerated its progress a little: but it was not till subsequent to the middle of the seventeenth century, that recitative received its last laws and true character from the productions of the admirable Carissimi, and Stradella. No composer of the seventeenth century was more the delight of his contemporaries, or more respected by posterity than GIACOMO CARISSIMI, Maestro di Capella of the German college at Rome. Kircher, in his *Mursurgia*, describes his music, and its effects, in terms of exalted panegyric; and speaks of him as a master then living, (1650) who had long filled the place of composer to the *Collegio Apollinare* with great reputation. He began to flourish about the year 1635, and according to Matheson, was still living in 1672. His productions are very numerous, though it does not appear that he ever composed for the theatre. His sacred and secular cantatas and motets have always had admission into every collection of good music. It has been often asserted by musical writers, that he was the inventor of cantatas; but it has already been shewn, that they had a more early origin. Carissimi must, however, be allowed the merit of greatly improving recitative in general,

by rendering it more expressive, articulate, and intelligible. Many of Carissimi's works are preserved in the British Museum, and in Dr. Aldrich's collection, Christ Church, Oxford.

Besides his numerous cantatas, duets, trios, and four part songs, Carissimi's compositions for the church, where he first introduced instrumental accompaniments, discover more genius, elegance, and design, than those of any preceding, or contemporary composer. Stradella's untimely death perhaps only prevented him from writing as much, and as well as Carissimi.

Kircher, the contemporary of Carissimi, after a just eulogium on his compositions in general, and telling us that he had the power of exciting in his hearers whatever affection he pleased, speaks of his oratorio of Jephtha, and the new and admirable effects produced in it, by his knowledge of harmony, modulation, and the happy expression of the passions. The chorus in his sacred drama, *Plorate filia Israel*, which follows the *lamento della figlia di Jepti*, is as remarkable for the accuracy of fugue and imitation, as for its plaintive expression. Carissimi is said, by Matheson, to have acquired a considerable fortune by the exercise of his profession, and to have attained the great age of ninety.

He appears to have been the favourite composer

and model of Dr. Aldrich, who possessed a complete collection of his works, which he scored with his own hand, and appears to have studied with great attention. And PURCELL evidently formed his style on the productions of Carissimi and Stradella, particularly in his recitative and secular songs.

Don GIOVANNI LEGRENGI, of Bergamo, has been already mentioned as a dramatic composer at Venice, for the theatres of which city he produced fifteen operas, between the year 1664, and 1684. He was likewise a favourite composer of cantatas, of which he published at Venice two books, containing twenty-four; one in 1674, and the other in 1679. During his youth he was sometime organist of Santa Maria Maggiore, in his native city of Bergamo; then Maestro di Capella of the church della Spirito Santo, in Ferrara; and lastly of St. Mark at Venice, and master of the *Conservatorio de Mendicanti*. The two great musicians, LOTTI and FRANCESCO GASPARINI, were his pupils, and are both said to have resided in his house at Venice, in the year 1684.

The reputation of SALVATOR ROSA, as a painter, original in point of genius and sublimity of conception, matchless, perhaps, in delineating the bold and terrific scenery of Nature in her rudest, and most majestic forms, is generally acknowledged: as a poet and a musician, he is not so universally known.

Among the musical manuscripts purchased by Dr. Burney at Rome, in 1770, was the music book of this extraordinary artist; which contains not only airs and cantatas set by Carissimi, Cesti, Luigi, Cavalli, Legrenzi, Capellini, Pasqualini, and Bandani, of which the words of several are by Salvator Rosa, but also eight entire cantatas, *written, set, and transcribed* by this celebrated painter himself. The book was purchased of his great-grand-daughter, who inhabited the house in which her ancestor lived and died. The *hand-writing* was ascertained by collation with his letters and *satires*, of which the originals are still preserved by his descendants.

The historians of Italian poetry, though they frequently mention Salvator as a satirist, seem never to have heard of his lyrical productions.

Salvator Rosa was either the most miserable, or the most discontented of men. His cantatas abound with the bitterest complaints, either against his mistress, or mankind in general. Among other melancholy reflections he informs us, “ that he has had “ more misfortunes than there are stars in the firmament, and that he has lived six lustres (thirty years) “ without the enjoyment of one happy day.”

In the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli di P. P. Certosini, at Rome, where Salvator was buried,

there is an inscription on his tomb, at which Crescimbeni, a Florentine, is angry, as it gives him, "*Il primato sopra tutti i rimatori Toscani.*" This, like almost all monumental praise, is certainly hyperbolic; but Salvator's poetry, like his painting, has great merit for its boldness and originality: the same masculine character reigns throughout all his productions. His lyrics are indeed somewhat rough, and his satires often coarse; yet, notwithstanding these imperfections, he appears to have possessed more poetical energy than his contemporaries. The tenth composition in Salvator's music book, is written by himself and set by Cesti. The subject is the Incantation of a female distracted with love, disappointment, and revenge. There is great strength and imagination in the poetry of this cantata, which seems to have furnished ideas to the author of Purcell's *Mad Bess*: "By the croaking of the toad," &c. And in Salvator's poem, all the charms and spells of the witches in *Macbeth* are invoked.

No. 11, in the above-mentioned curious manuscript, contains a grumbling, gloomy history of the life of this painter, poet, and musician, in which the comic exaggeration is not unpleasing; but it is rather a satire on the times in which he lived, than a lyric composition. However it is set by Baudini; but

being chiefly narrative, the music is almost wholly recitative. Dr. Burney has published the following translation of this cantata.

No end or truce to grief I find—
O! Fortune! bear my case in mind!
Nor let a man of flesh and blood
For ever o'er his mis'ries brood:
Or hither come to toil and sweat,
Merely to pay great Nature's debt.
And crowd the mansions of the dead
Before his labours give him bread!

Is Heaven deaf to me alone?
Barren the earth and dark the sun?
And when to peace there seems no bar,
Shall devils wage eternal war?
If I step forth to see a friend
The clouds a deluge instant send.
And ship I've never been aboard,
But winds and waves have furious roar'd.
Yet, over begg'ry to prevail,
Should I to India ever sail,
And coming back 'scape rocks and killing,
In purse I should not have a shilling.

At market, when provisions fresh
I buy, the bones outweigh the flesh;

And if perchance I go to court,
Th' attendants at my dress make sport.
Point at my garb, threadbare and shabby,
And shun me like a leper scabby.

My faith is Christian sound and true,
Yet, like an unbelieving Jew,
I'm seized without the least contrition,
And hurried to the Inquisition.

Awake, in bed, I castles build,
Which to reflection instant yield :
And, if asleep, in dreams I feel
More torture than on rack or wheel.

While I have neither house nor home,
Others can dwell in lofty dome :
When e'en of silver, for parade,
The vilest utensils are made.
No other wealth have I, than hope,
Which shews a workhouse, or a rope.

But, pray observe, when heat infernal,
In summer threats our town to burn all,
And marrows melt of man and brute,
How I still trudge in winter suit.
Happy I thought the life I led,
If not in want of daily bread,

And that conveniences and wealth
Were useless things in time of health.
And could a *painter*, senseless wretch,
A plan of life no better sketch ?
Against my skill the powers combine,
Nor let me finish one design.

I woods create in France and Spain,
And vessels riding on the main :
And though I find it hard to live,
With ease to others vineyards give :
With flocks and herds, and fields of corn,
And all that Nature's works adorn :
Can set a prince upon a throne,
While not an inch of land's my own.

Fortune to me's a stranger quite,
And makes me pay each short delight
With pain and tears.—Substance I've none,
Nor can I from misfortune run.
While all to whom I tell my tale,
In kindness thus my ears regale :—

“ And are you, Rosa, so unwise
“ To think the world should pictures prize ?
“ Or in these giddy thoughtless times
“ A value set upon your rhymes ?
“ No, no, they hate all toil and pains,
“ And he'll thrive most who's fewest brains,

“ For knowledge none at present dig,
“ Nor for your talents care a fig.”

Then learn from me ye students all,
Whose wants are great and hopes are small,
That better 'tis at once to die,
Than linger thus in penury ;
For 'mongst the ills with which we're curst,
To live a beggar is the worst.

We are now arrived at the golden age of cantatas in Italy. This species of composition attained the highest degree of perfection, without accompaniments, about the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the last century, by the genius and industry of Alessandro Scarlatti, Francesco Gasparini, Giovanni Bononcini, Antonio Lotti, the Baron d'Astorga, and Benedetto Marcello: and at a later period, in a more elaborate style, with accompaniments, by Nicolo Porpora, and Giovanbatista Pergolesi, who appear to have been the last eminent composers that cultivated this species of chamber drama, till it was revived by Sarti.

The most original and voluminous composer of cantatas, was Alessandro Scarlatti: the genius of this great master was almost inexhaustible, and so popular, that many of the best composers of the

first fifty years of the last century, appropriated the most beautiful of his ideas to themselves, and without ceremony, adopted them as their own offspring; taking the chance of their innumerable plagiarisms being ultimately discovered, and restored by some future critic to their real owner.

Of this fertile musician's cantatas, Dr. Burney informs us, that he purchased a manuscript in his own hand-writing, containing thirty-five, which were chiefly composed at Tivoli, during a visit to Andrea Adami, Maestro di Capella to the Pope, and author of "*Osservazione per ben regolare il Coro, ed i cantori della Cap. Pontif.*" published at Rome, in 1711. Each of these cantatas is dated; by which we learn, that he frequently produced one every day, for several days together; and that the whole number were composed between the months of October 1704, and March 1705.

The violoncello parts of many of these cantatas were so excellent, that whoever was able to do them justice was thought a supernatural being. Geminiani used to relate, that *Franceschilli*, a celebrated performer on the violoncello at the beginning of the last century, accompanied one of these cantatas at Rome so admirably, while Scarlatti was at the harpsichord, that the company, being good Catholics, and living in a country where miraculous powers are

still supposed to exist, were firmly persuaded, that it was not Franceschelli who had played the violoncello, but an angel, who had descended, and assumed his shape.

The cantatas of Scarlatti are still much sought and admired by curious collectors. It must, however, be confessed, that this author is not always free from pedantry and affectation. His modulation, in struggling at novelty, is sometimes crude and unnatural; and he was guilty of a great error, in more frequently striving to express the meaning of a single word, than the general sentiment of the whole poem. Yet, perhaps, there is not one of his cantatas, which is not marked by some peculiar beauty of melody or modulation. DURANTE, his pupil, after his decease, worked several of them into duets of the most learned and curious kind, which many of the greatest masters now living continue to study, and teach to their favourite and most accomplished scholars.

During the residence of Alessandro Scarlatti at Naples, he entertained so high an opinion of Francesco Gasparini, then a composer, and a harpsichord master of great eminence at Rome, that he placed his son Domenico, while a youth, to study under him in that city. This testimony of confidence in his probity and abilities, gave birth to a singular correspondence between these two great men.

sicians. Gasparini composed a cantata in a curious and scientific style, worthy the notice of such a master, and sent it as a present to Scarlatti. "*Cantata inviata dal Signor Francesco Gasparini al Signor Ales. Scarlatti.*"

To this musical epistle Scarlatti not only added an air, but replied by another cantata of a still more subtil and artificial character, making use of the same words, "*Cantata in risposta al Signor Gasparini, del Signor Ales. Scarlatti.*" This reply produced a rejoinder from Gasparini, who sent Scarlatti another cantata, in which the modulation of the recitative is very learned and abstruse. Scarlatti seemingly determined not to be outdone in this correspondence, sent him a second composition to the same words, in which the modulation is the most extraneous, and the notation the most equivocal and perplexing, perhaps, that were ever committed to paper. This is entitled, "*Seconda Cantata del Signor Ales. Scarlatti in Idea Eumana, ma in Regolo Cromatico, ed è per ogni professore.*"*

* On shewing this very composition to Sacchini, he appeared to discern its intrinsic merit through all its pedantry: and said, that it was necessary to look at such music sometimes "*per non essere sorpresa.*"

Francesco Gasparini's twelve cantatas, of which the second edition was printed at Lucca in 1697, were the first productions that he published. They are graceful, elegant, natural, and often pathetic: less learned and uncommon than those of Ales. Scarlatti; but, for that very reason, more generally pleasing, and open to the pillage and imitation of composers gifted with little invention. There is a movement in his second cantata, which would remind all who are acquainted with Dr. Pepusch's celebrated cantata, *Alexis*, of the air, "Charming sounds that sweetly languish."*

Giovanni Bononcini, whose long residence in England, and contentions with Handel, are well known, was perhaps the most voluminous composer of cantatas, next to Scarlatti. At present, none of his compositions will bear any comparison with those of Handel, for strength and vigour of genius; but, during his life, many of them were more admired on the continent in every part of Europe, than by his most violent partisans in England.

* The exquisite manner in which the late Mr. Harrison sung this charming air, as exquisitely accompanied on the violoncello by Linley, is still fresh in the recollection of the present musical world.

In 1721, he published in London, "*Cantate e duetti*, dedicated *alla sacra Maestà di Giorgio, Re della Gran Bretagna*." This work is finely engraved on copper, in long quarto, and contains many elegant and pleasing passages for the time when they were composed, with some ingenious harmonies and imitations; but being less *recherchés* than the cantatas of the elder Scarlatti, and less elaborate than the songs of Handel, easy and natural were then misconstrued by his opponents into dullness and want of science. However, even Handel himself condescended to use many of his passages and closes in opera songs, which he composed several years after this publication. Many of Bononcini's recitatives are masterly and expressive, particularly in his first and eleventh cantatas, where the modulation is bold and learned.

The whole ninth and tenth of these cantatas would be pleasing even now to candid judges of good music and refined taste, particularly if they attended to the expression and nice accentuation of the Italian language. There are also some excellent cantatas extant, by his brother, ANTONIO BONONCINI, which Geminiani and others used to prefer to those of Giovanni.

ANTONIO LOTTI was a composer of cantatas; but upon examining them, it appears, that his me-

lody is gone, though his harmony will always be excellent. It is generally in complication, fugue, and music of many parts, that we must now seek for pleasure from the works of old masters.

His pupil, however, the illustrious **BENEDETTO MARCELLO**, composed a great number of cantatas, of which the vigour of conception, and ingenuity of design, are more pleasing than the generality of his celebrated Psalms.

The cantatas of **BARON D'ASTORGA** are much celebrated: they do not, however, fulfil the expectations excited by his high reputation, so deservedly acquired by the composition of his admirable, elegant, and refined *Stabat Mater*.*

ANTONIO CALDARA, so many years composer to the Emperor at Vienna, published twelve cantatas at Venice, in 1699—six for a soprano, and six for a contralto voice. There is a copy of this work in Dr. Aldrich's collection, Christ Church, Oxford: and from the excellence of all this author's other

* Extracts from this *Stabat Mater*, and from the sacred compositions of many of the authors cited in this letter, have been lately published by Mr. La Trobe, in a most excellent work, which the author of this note strongly recommends to the notice of his readers.

compositions, there is great reason to conclude them worthy the rank he bears among the professors of his time.

The cantatas of NICOLA PORPORA have been always much esteemed, on account of the excellence of their recitatives, and the good taste and truly vocal style of the airs. But by confining himself rigidly in his songs and cantatas to such passages as are only fit for the voice, they will seem to want spirit when tried upon an instrument. And, perhaps, the art is more indebted to this master, for having polished and refined recitative, and measured air, than for enriching it by the fertility of his invention.

PERGOLESI's cantatas will be considered elsewhere. But cantatas, which were composed with more care, and sung with more taste and science, than any other species of vocal music, during the latter end of the seventeenth, and the beginning of the last century, seem to have been wholly laid aside after the decease of Pergolesi, till revived by Sarti, who has set, in the manner of cantatas, several of METASTASIO's charming little poems, which he calls "*Canzonette*."

These exquisite compositions were produced by Sarti, expressly for the voices of Pacchierotti, Mar-

chesi, and Rubinelli; and are perhaps, in all respects, the most perfect and complete models of chamber music, that have ever been composed.

It is, indeed, to be lamented, that a species of composition, so admirably calculated for private parties, as the *cantata*, should now be so seldom cultivated: as it is a drama in miniature, having a beginning, a middle, and an end; in which the charms of poetry are united with those of music, and the mind is amused, while the ear is gratified. Opera scenes, or single songs, now supply the place of *cantatas* in domestic parties and all private concerts: and, besides the loss which these sustain, in being taken out of their proper station, as they were originally calculated for a numerous orchestra, they can seldom, if ever, be completely accompanied by a small band, much less by a single instrument.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLIX.

Sept. 4th, 1813.

ATTEMPTS AT DRAMATIC MUSIC IN ENGLAND,
PREVIOUS TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
ITALIAN OPERA.

THEATRICAL representations, and all public amusements, having been suppressed by the Parliament in 1647, no exhibition was even attempted till 1656, when Sir William D'Avenant's "*Entertainment of Declamation and Music after the manner of the Ancients*," seems to have escaped molestation, more by connivance than by the protection of government. For though Anthony Wood has asserted, that Sir William D'Avenant had obtained permission to open a theatre, for the performance of operas in the *Italian language*, during the Protectorate, when all other theatrical exhibitions were suppressed; "because, being in an unknown tongue, they could not corrupt the morals of the people:" yet, on examination, it appears to be wholly a mistake. Ant. Wood at that time had never been in

London, and was but little acquainted with its amusements.

The first edition of Sir William D'Avenant's entertainment was published in 1657. In the preceding year it had been performed at RUTLAND HOUSE, and was arranged in the following manner. "After a flourish of music, the curtains are drawn, "and the prologue enters," who *speaks* in *English* verse, and talks of the *entertainment* being an *opera*, which is the only word uttered in the *Italian language* throughout the exhibition. He desires the audience, indeed, to regard this small theatre as "their passage, and the narrow way, to our Elysian "field, the OPERA." But not a line in this introduction is set to music, either in *recitative* or *air*; though, after it has been spoken, and the curtains are again closed, "a consort of instrumental music, "adapted to the sullen disposition of Diogenes, "being heard awhile, the curtains are suddenly "opened, and in two gilded *rostras* appear Diogenes the Cynic, and Aristophanes the poet, who "DECLAIM against and for public entertainments "by moral representations."—Then, in two prose orations, which were *spoken*, not sung, public exhibitions are respectively censured and defended, in the styles of that celebrated philosopher and comic poet.

Operas are, indeed, frequently mentioned and described. Diogenes, evidently alluding to the splendid manner in which they were at that time exhibited in Italy, says "Poetry is the subtile engine, by which the wonderful body of the *opera* must move. I wish, Athenians! you were all poets, for then if you should meet, and with the pleasant vapours of Lesbian wine, fall into profound sleep, and concur in a long dream, you would every morning enamel your houses, tile them with gold, and pave them with aggots ;"

When the cynic has finished his *declamation*, "a consort of music, befitting the pleasant disposition of Aristophanes, being heard, he answers him ;" and defends *operas*, their poetry, music, and decorations, with considerable wit and argument. After which, "the curtains are suddenly closed, and the company entertained by instrumental and vocal music, with a *song*."

"The song being ended, a consort of instrumental music, after the French composition, being heard awhile, the curtains are suddenly opened, and in the *rostras* appear sitting, a Parisian and a Londoner in the livery robes of both cities, who *claim* concerning the pre-eminence of Paris and London."

"When the Parisian has finished his philippic

“against our capital, after a consort of music,
 “imitating the *waites* of London, he is answered by
 “the Londoner.”

In neither of these harangues is the *opera* mentioned, which as yet had not found its way into either capital. When the Englishman has terminated his defence, there is another song, an epilogue, and lastly a flourish of music: after which the curtain is closed, and the entertainment finished. At the end of the book we are told, that “the vocal
 “and instrumental music was composed by Dr.
 “Charles Coleman, Captain Henry Cook, Mr.
 “Henry Lawes, and Mr. George Hudson.”

By this account it decidedly appears, that the performance was neither an Italian nor an English *opera*. That there was no *recitative*, and but two songs in it, the rest being entirely *declaimed* or *spoken*, without the least assistance from music. It is probable, however, that Sir William D'Avenant had some distant design of introducing exhibitions, similar to the Italian *opera*, on the English stage; for which this entertainment, as it was called, was intended to pave the way.

Pope tells us, that “the *Siege of Rhodes*, by
 “Sir William D'Avenant, was the first *opera* sung
 “in England.

"On each enervate string they taught the note
 "To pant, or tremble, through an eunuch's throat."

We know not what foundation our great poet had for this opinion, unless he trusted to the loose assertion of Langbaine, who in "*An Account of the English Dramatic Poets*," says, that the *Siege of Rhodes*, and some other plays of Sir William D'Avenant, in the times of the Civil Wars, were acted in *stilo recitativo*. The first performance of the *Siege of Rhodes* was at Rutland House in 1656.

It was revived in 1663, and a second part added to it. In the prologue, the author calls it "our play," and the performers, *players*, not singers. The first part is divided into five entries, each preceded by instrumental music. But there is no proof that it was sung in recitative, either in the dedication to Lord Clarendon, in the folio edition of 1673, or in the body of the drama.

It was indeed written in rhyme, which, after the Restoration, became a fashion with theatrical writers, probably in imitation of the French, and to gratify the partiality of Charles the Second to the customs and amusements of that nation. Such dramas were called *heroic plays*, and the verse, *dramatic poesy*. In fact, this drama bore no stronger resemblance to

the Italian opera, than the MASQUES which long preceded it; and in which were always introduced songs, choruses, splendid scenery, machinery, and decorations.

Downes, the prompter, tells us, that in 1658, Sir William D'Avenant exhibited another entertainment, entitled *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru*, expressed by vocal and instrumental music, and by art of perspective in scenes. These scenes and decorations, according to Downes, were the first that were introduced on a public stage in England. Mr. Malone, in his Supplement to Shakespeare, imagines that Cromwell, from his hatred to the Spaniards may the more readily have tolerated this spectacle.

Such were the first attempts at dramatic music to English words in this country, long before the music, language, or performers of Italy were employed on our stage. The *word opera*, however, seems to have been very familiar to our poets and countrymen, even previous to the period now under consideration. *Stilo recitativo* was talked of by Ben Jonson, as early as the year 1617. After this it was used in other masques, and in cantatas, before a regular drama wholly set to music was attempted.

The high favour, which in consequence of the

united talents of Quinault and Lulli, operas attained in France, gave birth to several attempts at similar performances in England.

Sir William D'Avenant dying in 1668, while his new theatre in DORSET GARDENS was building, the patent and management devolved on his widow, and his son Charles, afterwards Doctor D'Avenant, well known as a political writer and civilian.

The new house was opened in 1671; but the public still continuing to prefer the King's Company at Drury Lane, obliged Mr. D'Avenant to have recourse to a new species of entertainments, which were afterwards called *dramatic operas*: of which description were the *Tempest*, *Macbeth*, *Circe*, *Psyche*, and some others, all "set off," says Cibber, "with the most expensive decorations of scenes and habits, and with the best voices and dancers.

"This sensual supply of sight and sound," continues he, "coming in to the assistance of the weaker party, it was no wonder they should grow too hard for sense and simple nature, when it is considered, how many more people there are who can see and hear, than can think and judge."

Thus men without taste or ears for music, ever comfort themselves with imagining, that their contempt for what they neither feel nor understand, is a mark of superior wisdom; and that every lover of

music is a fool. To these sworn enemies of harmony, the well known epigram on contemners of poetry, may with equal propriety be applied.

That ev'ry poet is a fool,
 By demonstration Ned can shew it.
 Happy could Ned's inverted Rule,
 Prove ev'ry fool to be a poet.

The ingenious author of the *Biographia Dramatica* tells us, that "the preference given to D'Avenant's theatre, on account of its scenery and decorations, alarmed those belonging to the rival house. "To stop the progress of the public taste, and divert it towards themselves, they endeavoured to ridicule the performances, which were so much followed. The person employed for this purpose, was Thomas Duffet, (a writer of miserable farces) who parodied the *Tempest*, *Macbeth*, and *Psyche*: "These efforts were, however, ineffectual."

This is fair and historical; but after saying that "the Duke's theatre continued to be frequented," when he adds, "the victory of sound and shew over *sense* and *reason* was as complete in the theatre at this period, as it has often been since," it seems as if sense and reason had for a moment deserted this agreeable, and in general accurate and candid,

writer. *Opera* is an alien who is obliged silently to bear the insults of the natives, or else she might courteously retort, that nonsense *without* music is as frequently heard on the English stage, as *with it* on the Italian: and, besides, when Metastasio is the poet, who shall venture to say, that either good sense or good poetry is banished from the stage?

But it does not clearly appear, because music and decorations were added to Shakespeare's *Tempest* and *Macbeth*, that one theatre was in greater want of sense at this time than another. In these dramas, as they were altered by Shadwell and Sir William D'Avenant, little was curtailed; and in *Macbeth*, little variation was made from what is still sung to the same music by Matthew Lock, of which the rude and wild excellence cannot be surpassed.*

In these *operas*, as they were called, on account

* Many persons imagine the justly celebrated music in *Macbeth*, to be the production of Purcell; it certainly bears a striking resemblance to his peculiar style: and is beyond comparison superior to any other work of Matthew Lock, which has come down to us. A musical friend of the author of this note, assured him, that he possessed the original score of the music in *Macbeth*, in Henry Purcell's own hand-writing.

of the music, dances, and splendid scenery, with which they were decorated, none of the fine speeches were made into *songs*, nor was the dialogue carried on in *recitative*, which was never attempted on the English stage in the seventeenth century throughout a whole piece. And even to this day it has never succeeded, if, perhaps, we except the serious opera of *Artaxerxes*, by the late Dr. Arne; whose music being of a superior description, and well executed, found an English audience, who could occasionally *tolerate recitative*. *Artaxerxes*, however, still continues, rather as an exception to a general rule, than as a model for future composers, for it is the *only* serious opera in our language.

In the censure of these musical dramas, which has been retailed from one writer to another, from the middle of Charles the Second's reign to the present time, the subject seems never to have been fairly and candidly examined; and there does not appear to have been any just cause of complaint against the public for frequenting such representations, particularly those written by Shakespeare, in which the principal characters were performed by Mr. and Mrs. Betterton, as was the case in *Macbeth*, though music, machinery, and dancing, were profusely added to the treat.*

* Of *Betterton's* merit as an actor, every one has

The *Tempest*, the first of these *semi-operas*, was presented to the public early in 1673; and in February of the same year, *Psyche*. This last was a close imitation of a musical drama, written in French by Moliere, and set by Lulli in 1672, in the manner of the Italian operas which Cardinal Mazarine had caused to be performed before Louis the Fourteenth during his minority. The music of *Psyche*, as performed in London, was not printed till 1675, when it was published with the following title: "The English Opera ; or the Vocal Musick in *PSYCHE*, with the instrumental therein intermixed. To which is adjoyned the instrumental Musick in the *TEMPEST*. By Matthew Lock, composer in ordinary to his Majesty, and organist to the Queen." This publication is dedicated to James, Duke of Monmouth.

read and heard ; but Mrs. Betterton, according to Cibber, was "at once tremendous and delightful" in the character of Lady Macbeth. The same may, with *at least* equal justice, be said of the matchless *SIDDONS*. It is not easy to conceive the possibility of that part having been at any time more perfectly portrayed than most of our readers have probably witnessed in the admirable performance of this bright ornament to her profession.

There is a preface of some length by the composer, Matthew Lock, which, like his music, is rough, and nervous, exactly corresponding with the idea which is generated of his private character, by the perusal of his controversy with Salmon, and the sight of his portrait in the Music School at Oxford.

It is written with that natural petulance which probably gave birth to most of the quarrels in which he was involved. He begins with a complaint of the tendency of his brother musicians "to peck and carp " at other men's conceptions, how mean soever may " be their own. And expecting to fall under the lash " of some soft-headed or hard-hearted composer," he sets about removing " the few blocks at which " they may take occasion to stumble," with a degree of indignation which implies an irascible spirit under no great governance.

The first objection which he thinks likely to be made, is to the word *Opera*; to which he answers, that it is borrowed from the *Italian*, who by this word distinguished this kind of drama from their comedies, which, after a plan is laid, are spoken *extempore*; whereas, this is not only designed, but written with art and industry, and afterwards set to suitable music. In which idea he has produced the following compositions, which, for the most part, are "in

“ their nature, soft, easy, and, as far as his abilities
 “ could reach, agreeable to the design of the poet,
 “ for in them there is ballad to single air, counter-
 “ point, recitative, fugue, canon, and chromatic mu-
 “ sic, which variety, without vanity be it said, was
 “ never in court or theatre, till now, presented in
 “ this nation.” He confesses, however, that some-
 thing in this way of composition had been attempted
 before, but more by himself than any other; and
 adds, “ that the author of the drama prudently con-
 “ sidering, that though Italy *was*, and is, the great
 “ academy of the world for music, and this species
 “ of entertainment, yet as this piece was to be per-
 “ formed in England, which is entitled to no such
 “ praise, he mixed it with *interlocutor*, as more pro-
 “ per to our genius.”

He then concludes his peevish preface by confes-
 sing, that “ the instrumental music before and be-
 “ tween the acts, and the entries in the acts of *PSY-*
 “ *CHE* were omitted by the consent of the author,
 “ Signor Gio. Batista Draghi; and that the tunes of
 “ the Entries and dances in the *TEMPEST* (the
 “ dances being changed) were omitted.”

Here we have a short history of these early at-
 tempts at dramatic music on our stage; in which,
 as in the most successful representations of this kind
 in later times, the chief part of the dialogue was

spoken, and recitative, or *musical declamation*, which is the true criterion and characteristic of Italian operas, but seldom used, unless to introduce some particular air or chorus.

Upon examining this music, it seems to have been composed on Lulli's model. The melody is neither recitative nor air, but partaking of both, with a change of measure as frequent as in any of the old serious French operas. Lock possessed sufficient genius and knowledge of harmony to have surpassed his model, and to have cast his movements in a mould of his own construction; but such was the passion of Charles the Second, and consequently of his court, for every thing French, that in all probability Lock was commanded to imitate Lulli. The music for the witches in *Macbeth*, of which he is generally supposed to have been the author, when produced in 1674, was as smooth and airy as any of the time. It has now obtained by age that wild and savage cast which is admirably adapted to the diabolical characters who are supposed to perform it.

In his third introductory music to the *Tempest*, which is called a *curtain tune*, probably from the curtain being drawn up during its performance, he has for the first time introduced the use of *crescendo*, (louder by degrees) with *diminuendo* and *lento*, under the words *soft and slow by degrees*. No other

instruments are mentioned in the score of his opera of *Psyche* than *violins* for the ritornels; and yet so slow was the progress of that most exquisite and only perfect instrument during the seventeenth century, that in a general catalogue of music published in 1701, scarcely any compositions appear to have been printed for its use.

Downes, the prompter, tells us, that the scenes, machines, dresses, and other necessary decorations of *Psyche*, cost upwards of *eight hundred pounds*; so that, notwithstanding it was performed eight successive nights, it did not prove so profitable to the managers as the *Tempest*.

In 1677, Mr. Charles D'Avenant wrote a dramatic opera called *CIRCE*, which was set to music by John Banister, the king's first violin, and performed under the poet's own direction, at the Duke's theatre, with considerable applause. The prologue was written by Dryden, and the epilogue by the Earl of Rochester.

From this time Dryden became an advocate for this species of exhibition, and in 1678, wrote an opera, entitled, "*The State of Innocence, and Fall of Man*;" but this production, though printed, was never brought on the stage.

After the several essays at dramatic music above-mentioned, the King's Theatre languished without it,

and the Duke's ran in debt with it; so that shaking hands, and uniting their performers and interests, they formed only one company at Drury Lane in 1682.

This union, however, does not seem to have been so advantageous to the managers and actors as was expected; and in 1685, the last year of Charles II, they again separated, and the Duke's company renewed their attempts at Opera in Dorset Garden, with the assistance of Dryden, as poet. The times were turbulent, and this great writer, firm to the interest, or at least to the wishes of the court, wrote an allegorical, or rather, political drama, which he calls an opera, by the title of *Albion and Albanus*; and, to render it still more agreeable to his royal master, he had it set by a French composer called GRABUT, an obscure musician, whose name even is not to be found in the French annals of the art.

This drama, written under the auspices of King Charles the Second, was rehearsed several times, as the author informs us in his preface, before his Majesty, "who had publicly declared more than once, "that the compositions and choruses were more "just and more beautiful than he had heard in Eng- "land." This merry monarch, however, was not very skilful in music, nor very sensible to the charms of any species of it, but that of the gayest kind.

Unfortunately both for the poet and musician, his Majesty died before it was brought on the stage ; and when it did appear, it was unsuccessful.

Upon a perusal of this drama, it seems hardly possible, so near a revolution, that it could have escaped condemnation upon party principles ; as, under obvious allegories, Dryden has lashed the city of London, democracy, fanaticism, and, in short, whatever he supposed obnoxious to the spirit of the government at that period. Had Orpheus himself not only composed the poem and the music, but even performed the principal character, his powers would have been too feeble to charm such unwilling hearers.

Dryden, throughout the preface to this piece, in his usual manner, diffuses entertainment and instruction ; and though, in all probability, he had never seen or heard a single scene of an Italian opera performed, his definition of that species of drama, and precepts for its construction and perfection, are admirable, and in many respects still applicable to similar exhibitions.

“ An opera,” says he, “ is a poetical tale or fiction, “ represented by vocal and instrumental music, “ adorned with scenes, machines, and dancing. The “ supposed persons of this musical drama are generally supernatural, as gods and goddesses, and he-

“ roes, who at least are descended from them, and in
“ due time are to be adopted into their number. The
“ subject, therefore, being extended beyond the li-
“ mits of human nature, admits of that sort of mar-
“ vellous and surprizing conduct which is rejected
“ in other plays. Human impossibilities are to be
“ received, as they are in faith, because, where
“ gods are introduced, a supreme power is to be un-
“ derstood, and second causes are out of doors; yet
“ propriety is to be observed even here. The gods
“ are all to manage their peculiar provinces: and
“ what was attributed by the heathens to one power,
“ ought not to be performed by any other.

“ If the persons represented were to speak on the
“ stage, it would follow of necessity that the ex-
“ pressions should be lofty, figurative, and majes-
“ tical; but the nature of an opera denies the fre-
“ quent use of these poetical ornaments; for vocal
“ music, though it often admits a loftiness of sound,
“ yet always exacts a melodious sweetness; or, to
“ distinguish yet more justly, the recitative part of an
“ opera requires a more masculine beauty of expres-
“ sion and sound: the airs must abound in the soft-
“ ness and variety of numbers, their principal inten-
“ tion being to please the hearing, rather than to
“ gratify the understanding. As the first inventors
“ of any art or science, provided they have brought

“ it to perfection, are, in reason, to give laws to it ;
 “ so, whoever undertakes the writing an opera, is
 “ obliged to imitate the Italians, who have not only
 “ invented, but perfected this sort of dramatic mu-
 “ sical entertainment.

“ We know, that for some centuries the know-
 “ ledge of music has flourished principally in Italy,
 “ the mother of learning, and of arts ; that poetry
 “ and painting have been there restored, and so cul-
 “ tivated by Italian masters, that all Europe has been
 “ enriched out of their treasury.”

“ It is almost needless to speak any thing of that
 “ noble language in which this musical drama was
 “ first invented and performed. All, who are con-
 “ versant in the Italian, cannot but observe that it is
 “ the softest, the sweetest, the most harmonious,
 “ not only of any modern tongue, but even beyond
 “ any of the learned. It seems, indeed, to have
 “ been invented for the sake of poetry and music :
 “ the vowels are so abounding in all words, and the
 “ pronunciation so manly and so sonorous, that their
 “ very speaking has more of music in it than Dutch
 “ poetry or song.

“ This language has in a manner been refined,
 “ and purified from the Gothic, ever since the time
 “ of Dante, which is above four hundred years ago ;
 “ and the French, who now cast a longing eye to

“ their country, are not less ambitious to possess
 “ their elegance in poetry and music : in both which
 “ they labour at impossibilities ; for nothing can be
 “ improved beyond its own species, or further than
 “ its own original nature will allow ; as one with
 “ an ill-toned voice, though ever so well instructed
 “ in the rules of music, can never make a great
 “ singer. The English have yet more natural disad-
 “ vantages than the French ; our original Teutonic
 “ consisting in monosyllables, and those encumbered
 “ with consonants, cannot possibly be freed from
 “ these inconveniences.”

Dryden also tells us, that “ this opera was only
 “ intended as a prologue to a play of the nature of
 “ the *Tempest* ; which is a tragedy mixed with
 “ opera, or a drama, written in blank verse, adorned
 “ with scenes, machines, songs, and dances : so that
 “ the fable of it is all spoken and acted by the best
 “ of the comedians ; the other part of the enter-
 “ tainment to be performed by the same singers and
 “ dancers, who are introduced in this present
 “ opera.”

The tragedy here alluded to was *King Arthur*,
 which was not performed, till about the year 1690 ;
 by which time the fame and productions of PURCELL
 had convinced Dryden, that it was not necessary to
 import composers from France, for the support of

what were then called operas in England. Notice has been taken of this musical drama, in speaking of our great countryman's productions for the theatre, as well as those for the church and chamber.

By dramatic opera, Dryden, and other writers of his time, always mean a drama, which, like our present English comic-operas, is declaimed or spoken; and in which songs and symphonies are introduced; differing in this essential point from real operas, where there is no speaking, and where the dialogue and narrative parts are set to recitative.

Cibber, speaking of the dramatic operas of the seventeenth century, tells us, that "the sensual taste for sight and sound, was lashed by several good prologues of those days."*

This agreeable and lively writer, however, says very spiritedly afterwards, that when the bombast of Nat. Lee, came from the mouth of a Betterton, the multitude cared as little about the sense of what he uttered, as musical connoisseurs in regard to that of favourite airs in an Italian opera. But he speaks like a man, ignorant of music, and insensible to its effects. Without either a voice, or poetry, an excellent air, played on an instrument, has its merit; it

* Apology for his Life, chap. iv.

is not nonsense to musical ears, like a mere speaking voice, which only articulates nonsense. Cibber, however, lived long enough to hear and read the dramas of Metastasio, which deserve a better title. In an opera, modulated sound is the chief language, which is animated by figure and gesture; but still *sound* is the principal source of the pleasure we derive from such representations.

Cibber allows, page 91, that irresistible pleasure may arise from "a judicious elocution, with scarce any sense to assist it;" yet seems to deny, or forget, the possibility of being pleased with judicious and exquisite singing in the same degree and circumstances.

Bad actors, and bad singers require good writing and composition to render them supportable; but great actors, and great singers make every thing they utter interesting. And at page 93, Cibber just after speaking of Betterton's powers, seems to have undesignedly stumbled on the following reflection, "if the bare speaking voice has such allurements in it, how much less ought we to wonder, *how ever we lament*, that the sweet notes of *vocal* music should have captivated even the politer world, into apostacy of sense to the idolatry of sound?"—But why *lament*? and why are all lovers of good music well performed, to be regarded

as ideots, and apostates to sense? Did not the Greeks, the wisest and most philosophic race of men to be found in the annals of the world, delight in every species of music? And is not every civilized and polished nation delighted with music, in proportion to the progress they have made in the cultivation of the mind? Is it a necessary consequence that every lover and judge of music should be insensible to the merits of a great actor, and the charms of elocution? Had not Betterton, Booth, and Garrick, their full share of praise and admiration? And has it been denied to Mrs. Jordan, or Mrs. Siddons? In the recollection of most of our readers, have not the subscribers' boxes at the opera, however excellent the music and dancing, been deserted on the nights of these ladies' performance? In fact, the *prejugé du Metier* is a little too evident; in the good old comedian's account of the power of music, however he may have tried to reason himself into impartiality.

“ It is,” continues he, “ to the vitiated and low taste of the spectator, that the corruptions of the stage of all kinds have been owing. If the public were to discountenance, and declare against all the trash and fopperies, they have been so frequently fond of, both the actor and the authors must have

“ served their daily table with sound and wholesome
“ diet.”

This, by the way, is still supposing music, and every species of lyric poetry, *trash and fopperies*. It is not, most assuredly, the business of actors, or patentees to be convinced that music, vocal or instrumental, ever can be good, however well performed in any theatre, but their own. Genuine dramatic, and spurious *melo-dramatic*, poets, singers, and declaimers, have ever been at war. And if men were to be reasoned out of their senses, by any one of them, the world would not be in any degree better or wiser than it is at present.

The same sprightly writer urges a more forcible *professional* objection to these musical dramas, than their want of sense, by saying, that “ notwithstanding—
“ ing Purcell’s operas of the *Prophetess*, and *King*
“ *Arthur*, in which the patentees had embarked all
“ their hopes, were set off with the most expensive
“ decorations of scenes, and habits, with the best
“ voices, and dancers; and though their success was,
“ in appearance, very great, yet the whole receipts
“ did not so far balance the expense, as to keep them
“ out of a large debt, contracted at this time, and
“ which found work for the Court of Chancery for
“ about twenty years following.”

It is only in times of distress, that managers have recourse to music and dancing : when the actors are good, they are sure of the national patronage ; and whenever they are otherwise, pageantry, is the wretched, but only resource of the proprietors of public theatres.

LETTER L.

September 8, 1813.

ORIGIN AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ITALIAN OPERA IN ENGLAND.

WE have already observed, that, whatever attempts were made at musical dramas in this country during the seventeenth century, the language in which they were sung, was always *English*. Early indeed in that century the "*Stilo recitativo*" was brought hither from Italy by Nicholas Laniere ; but that was applied to English words only. And, afterwards

Henry Lawes, and others continued to affect this species of narrative melody in their dialogues, and historical songs, till the restoration, when a taste for French music prevailed in all our concerts and theatrical music, in order to flatter the partiality of Charles the Second for every thing that came from that nation. About the middle of this Prince's reign, the great favour, in which the musical drama was held at the court of Lewis the Fourteenth, under the direction of Lulli, of which, from the great intercourse then subsisting between the two nations, frequent accounts must have been brought hither, stimulated a desire in our monarch, and his courtiers, to establish similar performances in London. And we find that Cambert, the predecessor of Lulli, as lyric composer at Paris, had his opera of *Pomone*, which was originally composed for the court of Versailles, performed in London, by what in imitation of France, was called *an Academy of Music*: and after his decease, *Monsieur Grabut*, a contemptible musician, as we have already noticed, was employed by Dryden, in obedience to the partiality of his master, and *as we sincerely hope*, in opposition to his own better judgment, to set his opera of *Albion, and Albanus*, in preference to our own inimitable PURCELL!

The predilection for French music, and French politics, in England, was not so conspicuous either during the short reign of James the Second, or that of William and Mary. We find, on the contrary, by the advertisements of the times, that a taste for Italian music was gradually gaining ground towards the close of the seventeenth century. Even during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the poetry and music of Italy were much esteemed by the English, and the madrigals of that country adopted as models by our own masters in cultivating that species of composition. But Italian music was long talked of, and performed in England, before we heard *Italian singing*. Reggio, about this time, appears to have been the first, who was noticed for his superior taste, as a singing-master. And this newly acquired partiality for the *Italian style* of singing, naturally led to the establishment of operas in which a *variety* of performers might have an opportunity of displaying their vocal talents, both severally, and in concert.

In November, 1702, a *consort* at York-buildings was advertised in the Daily Courant, by performers lately come from Rome, which was twice repeated. On the 26th of the same month, another *consort* was advertised "at Hickford's dancing-school, by Signor " *Saggioni* of Venice, in which the famous Signor

"Gasparini, lately arrived from Rome, will play
"singly on the violin."*

The following year Gasparini and Signor Petto performed together at the concerts in York Buildings, and Saggioni was the composer. They were likewise advertised to accompany the singers in Purcell's *Fairy Queen*, at Drury Lane. On the 14th of May, Gasparini had a play, the *Relapse*, for his benefit at Drury Lane, when he performed several *new Italian Sonatas*: as these were afterwards repeated, no doubt they were favourably received. And on the first of June, in the theatrical advertisement for Lincoln's Inn Fields, where the *Rival Queens* was that day performed, it is said, that "SIGNORA
"FRANCESCA MARGARITA DE L'ÉPINE will sing,
"being positively the last time of her singing on the
"stage, during her stay in England."

She continued, however, singing more *last*, and *positively last* times, during the whole month: and never quitted England, where she remained till the

* Hickford's Room continued the fashionable place for concerts, till Mrs. Cornelie's in Soho Square, now turned into a Catholic chapel, the Pantheon, and Hanover Square Rooms, were built.

day of her death, about the middle of the last century. This lady came from Italy to England with a German musician of the name of Greber; and seems to have been one of the first Italian female singers, who appeared on our stage, previous to the establishment of an Italian opera. We shall have frequent occasion to mention her hereafter, among the performers in those representations, previous to the year 1718, when she married Dr. Pepusch, and retired from the stage.

In July, Italian *intermezzi*, or "mimical entertainments of singing and dancing," were performed at York Buildings. This was probably the first attempt at Italian dramatic music in action, in this kingdom.

In November, music by Signor Olsii, just arrived from Italy, was advertised at Lincoln's Inn Fields: and a subscription concert began at the same theatre, in which Mrs. Torrs sung several Italian and English songs. This lady, the constant rival of Margarita, was a principal singer in all the first operas, that were performed on our stage in English, and *in part* English and *in part* Italian, before a sufficient number of singers from Italy could be found to perform the whole in the language of that country.

1704. Gasparini still continued to play Italian sonatas at the play-house,* and Mrs. Tofts to sing at the subscription concert. There was a prologue and epilogue to this concert, and dances were introduced between the acts.

On the 29th of January, Margarita sung for the first time at Drury Lane ; at her second appearance there was a disturbance in the theatre, while she was singing, which was suspected to have originated in rival malice, and to have been created by the emissaries of Mrs. Tofts : an idea the more difficult to eradicate, as the principal agent had lived with Mrs. Tofts as a servant.

But as the law of retaliation is frequently practised on these occasions, it was thought necessary a few days after to insert the following paragraph and letter, in the *Daily Courant* of February 8th, 1704.

“ Ann Barwick having occasioned a disturbance

* *Corelli's* name was not yet mentioned in advertisements to concerts, or musical performances, at the play-houses. The first time that notice of any of his works occurs, is in the list of musical publications in Walsh's Catalogue, 1705.

“ at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, on Saturday
 “ night last, the fifth of February ; and being there-
 “ upon taken into custody, Mrs. Tofts, in vindica-
 “ tion of her innocence, sent a letter to Mr. Rich,
 “ Master of the said theatre, which is as followeth :

“ Sir,

“ I was very much surprised, when I was informed,
 “ that Ann Barwick, who was lately my servant,
 “ had committed a rudeness last night at the play-
 “ house, by throwing of oranges, and hissing, when
 “ Mrs. L’Epine, the Italian gentlewoman sung. I
 “ hope no one can think, that it was in the least
 “ with my privity, as I assure you it was not. I
 “ abhor such practices : and I hope you will cause
 “ her to be prosecuted, that she may be punished
 “ as she deserves. I am, Sir,

“ Your humble servant,

“ KATHARINE TOFTS.

“ To Christ. Rich, Esq. at the Theatre Royal,
 “ February 6th, 1704.

The musical drama, or opera, being at this time cultivated, and in general favour on the Continent, a new musical entertainment, “ after the manner of
 “ an opera,” called *Britain’s Happiness*, was brought out, at both our theatres, within a few days of each

other : the vocal part of that which was performed at Drury Lane, being composed by Weldon, the instrumental by Dieupart: and in that represented at Lincoln's Inn Fields, Leveredge composed the whole of the music. In June, Matthew Lock's opera of *Psyche* was revived; and in July, *Circe*, an English opera, set by Banister, in Charles the Second's time. It does not, however, appear, that any of these performances attracted much company.

1705. We are at length arrived at that precise period of time, when the first real opera, upon the Italian model, though not in the Italian language, was attempted on our stage. Cibber very justly observes in the *Apology for his Life*, chap. 9. that "the Italian opera had been long stealing into England; but in as rude a disguise, and unlike itself as possible, in a lame hobbling translation into our own language, with false quantities, or metre out of measure, to its original notes, sung by our own unskilful voices, with graces misapplied to almost every sentiment, and with action lifeless and unmeaning through every character."

The first musical drama, that was wholly performed after the Italian manner, was *ARSINOE, QUEEN OF CYPRUS*, translated from the Italian opera of the same name, written by Stanzani, of

Bologna, for that Theatre, in 1677, and revived at Venice in 1678.

The English version of this opera was set to music by THOMAS CLAYTON, one of the royal band, in the reign of William and Mary, who having been in Italy, had not only persuaded himself, but had the address to persuade others, that he was equal to the task of reforming our taste in music, and establishing operas in our own language, not inferior to those which were then so much admired on the Continent.

The singers were all English, consisting of Messrs. Hughes, Leveridge, and Cook, with Mrs. Tofts, Mrs. Cross, and Mrs. Lyndsey. This opera was performed at Drury Lane, January the 16th, by subscription, the pit and boxes being appropriated to the subscribers: the rest of the theatre open as usual. In the *Daily Courant*, ARSINOË is called "a new opera, after the Italian manner, all sung, being set by Master Clayton, with dances, and singing before and after the opera, by Signora F. Margarita de l'Epine." This singing was probably in Italian.

The Queen's, or as it has since been called, King's Theatre, in the Haymarket, was not then finished; and there were but two theatres open in London: Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Betterton, who was at the head of the Lincoln's Inn Fields company, removed to the new Theatre, built by Sir John Vanbrugh, in the Haymarket; when it was opened, April 9, 1705, with a new prologue, or occasional address, written by Sir Samuel Garth, and spoken by Mrs. Bracegirdle. The play was Dryden's *Indian Emperor*, with singing by the *Italian Boy*.

On the 24th of April was performed, *an Indian Pastoral*, called the Loves of Ergasto, set to music by GIACOMO GREBER, the German musician, already mentioned, who brought over from Italy Margarita de l'Epine, the part of Licoris by the *Italian Boy*. This was the first attempt at dramatic music in the opera house. Betterton's company continued acting plays till the end of June, when there were three representations of *Love for Love: all the characters being performed by women*.

On the 20th of July, according to the *Daily Courant*, Betterton and his company returned to Lincoln's Inn Fields, where they continued to act, till the Queen's Theatre was entirely finished.

On the 30th of October, Betterton quitted Lincoln's Inn Fields a second time; and returning to the Haymarket, opened that theatre, not with an opera, but with Sir John Vanbrugh's comedy of the *Confederacy*, then performed for the first time. This

most excellent comedy, though the parts were strongly cast, Leigh, Dogget, and Booth, Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Porter, and Mrs. Bracegirdle, forming a constellation of talents never, perhaps, exceeded on any stage, ran but six nights successively, though the performance of M. des Barques, a dancer just arrived from Paris, was added to the entertainment. It was indeed repeated once in November and twice in December in the same year; but in those times, as well as at the present day, it was generally found necessary, even in a new theatre, to have recourse to music, machinery, and pageantry; not, indeed, as we have now too frequently occasion to lament, to the *entire* exclusion of good taste and rational delight. Good plays at that time were usually *part* of the entertainment, and were only strengthened by music and dancing.

We learn from the *Daily Courant*, that sometimes there was singing in Italian and English, by Signora Maria, as lately taught by Signor N. Haym; and sometimes music, composed by Bononcini, &c.

Clayton is supposed to have brought from Italy, a collection of the favourite opera tunes of the time, from which he pillaged passages, and adapted them to English words: but this is doing the wretched opera of *Arsinoe* too much honour. In the title-page of the music, printed by Walsh, we are assured,

that it was wholly composed by Mr. Thomas Clayton; and, in justice to the masters of Italy, it must be allowed to be his own, as nothing so mean in melody, and so incorrect in counterpoint, was likely to have been produced by any of the favourite composers of that period. For not only the prosody and accents of our language, but even the common rules of musical composition are violated in every song. The translation is contemptible, and is rendered still more absurd by the manner in which it is set. The English must have been distractedly fond of dramatic music in those days, to have been attracted and amused by such trash. It is now scarcely credible, that in the course of the first year, this miserable performance, which neither deserved the name of a drama by its poetry, nor an opera by its music, should have sustained twenty-four representations!

Clayton associated with him in this undertaking, Nicola Haym and Charles Dieupart, men of musical talents infinitely superior to his own: the one performed the principal violoncello, the other the first violin. The opera of *Camilla*, translated from the Italian of Silvio Stampiglio, by Owen Mac Swiney, and performed by the same singers as *Arsinoe*, was brought out at Drury Lane by subscription on the 30th of April, 1706, preceded by a prologue, written by Mr. Mainwaring.

It was represented nine times before the ninth of July, when the company removed to her Majesty's theatre in Dorset Gardens, where *Camilla* and *Arsinoe* were again performed. The company again returning to Drury Lane on the 30th of November, continued from time to time the representation of this first English edition of that celebrated opera.

At the new theatre in the Haymarket, a subscription was likewise opened for an opera, but very unsuccessfully: for Cibber says, that in order "to strike in with the prevailing novelty, Sir John Vanbrugh and Mr. Congreve, patentees, opened their new Haymarket theatre with a translated opera to Italian music, called the *Triumph of Love*, but this not having in it the charms of *Camilla*, either from the inequality in the music or voices, had but a cold reception, being performed but three days, and these not crowded."

This account is correct in no particular, but the bad success of the opera; that, indeed, was even worse than this celebrated comedian and lively writer has represented it: for in the *Daily Courant*, and other newspapers of the times, it is advertised but *twice*—on the 7th and 16th of March; but Cibber had forgotten even the name of the piece, which was not the *Triumph*, but the *Temple of Love*. It was set by Greber, the German, and could not

therefore with accuracy be styled *Italian* music. The principal singer in this opera was his scholar, Margarita de l'Epine, then commonly called, with true national elegance, Greber's Peg. He again errs by saying, that the theatre was *opened* with this opera; for, on January 1st, 1706, Vanbrugh's *Mistake* was acted, in which Betterton played Alvarez, and Booth Don Carlos: and the company continued to act plays only, every night, till this opera was brought out; which being laid aside after the second performance, no musical piece was attempted till the 5th of April, when Durfey's comic opera, called the *Wonders in the Sun*, came out. This whimsical drama was dedicated to the celebrated society of the *Mit-Cat-Club*, and furnished with the words of many of its songs, by the most eminent wits of the age.

Nothing, however, like Italian music, or fine singing, was attempted in this piece, as the songs were all set to ballad tunes of a true English growth. It was performed only five times, and then wholly laid aside; nor were any other musical pieces produced during the rest of the season at this theatre.

1707. Such, however, was now the rage for this exotic species of amusement, even in its infant state, that the perspicacious critic and zealous patriot, Mr. Addison, condescended to write an opera, for the

same English singers, as were now employed in the performance of *Arsinoe* and *Camilla*, at Drury Lane.

This long expected drama, for which a subscription was opened, appeared on the 4th of March, 1707.—The parts were cast in the following manner.

Queen Eleanor,	- - - -	Mrs. Tofts.
Page,	-	Mr. Holcombe, usually called the Boy.
Sir Trusty, keeper of the bower,		Mr. Leveridge.
Grideline, his wife	- - -	Mrs. Linsey.
Rosamond,	- - - - -	Sig ^a . Maria Gallia.
King Henry,	- - - - -	Mr. Hughs.
First Guardian Angel,	- -	Mr. Lawrence.
Second Guardian Angel,	-	Miss Reading.

Mr. Addison, though he had visited Italy, and was always ambitious of being thought a judge of music, discovers, whenever he mentions the subject, a total want of sensibility, as well as knowledge of the art. But this writer and critic, always admirable and luminous in topics within his grasp, in employing CLAYTON to set his opera of *Rosamond*, manifested a total want of taste and intelligence, in regard to music; for the pretensions of so shallow and despicable a composer, could impose only on

the grossest ignorance, and the most defective ear.

We may estimate Mr. Addison's abilities to decide concerning the comparative degrees of national excellence in the science of music, not only by his predilection for the productions of Clayton, but by his utter insensibility to the force and originality of Handel's compositions in *RINALDO*, with which all true judges and lovers of music appear to have been captivated.*

The opera of *Rosamond*, notwithstanding its poetical merit, and the partiality of a considerable part of the nation for English music and English singing, as well as a fervent wish to establish this elegant species of entertainment in our country,

* See *Spectator*, No. 29,—also, No. 5; where he tells us with a sneer, that Rossi, the poet, “calls Myneer Handel, the *Orpheus* of the age; and acquaints the public, that he composed this opera in a fortnight.” Had Mr. Addison been competent to discern the superior excellence of this music over that of Clayton, or any which had then been heard on our opera stage, the shortness of time in which it was produced, would have impressed him with wonder and respect for its author.

without the assistance of foreigners, after supporting with great difficulty only three representations, was laid aside, and never again performed to the same music.*

The verses in *Rosamond* are, *in general*, highly polished, and more lyrical, perhaps, than those of any poem of a similar description in our language—the rhymes are sometimes execrably bad: in this respect, as in music, Addison's ear was probably defective. Nor is this opera entirely free from those absurdities, which he ridicules with such exquisite humour in the productions of others.

As a drama, *Rosamond* abounded in imperfections; among which, the loss of the principal character in the second act appears the most glaring:

* In the year 1733, this opera was set as a *Coup d'Essai*, by Thomas Augustine, afterwards Dr. Arne, son of the celebrated *upholsterer*, immortalized in the *Tatler*, and performed at the Little Theatre, in the Hay-market, in which his sister, Miss Arne, afterwards *MRS. CIBBER*, personated *Rosamond*. In that character this admirable actress first appeared on the stage as a singer. The three following airs were excellently set by Arne, and continued long in general favour: “No, no, ’tis decreed,”—“*Was ever nymph like Rosamond?*”—and, “*Rise, Glory, rise.*”

nor is it compensated by any adequate incident, to keep the audience awake during the remainder of the opera. It met, as we have seen, with the fate it deserved, and therefore let it rest in peace.

After the failure of *Rosamond*, from the attractions of which such crowded houses had been expected, another English opera was brought out at Drury Lane, on the 1st of April, called *Thomyris, Queen of Scythia*, written by Motteux, and adjusted, as he tells us in the Preface, to airs of Scarlatti and Bononcini. The recitatives, and whole accompaniment of this pasticcio, were committed to the care of Mr. Pepusch. Nine representations of this opera, and eight of *Camilla*, supplied the musical wants of this theatre, till the 6th of December, when VALENTINI URBANI, a soprano, and a female singer, called the *Baroness*, arrived; who, with Margarita de l'Epine, were engaged at Drury Lane, to sing in the same opera of *Camilla*, and availing themselves of Bononcini's music, performed their parts in *Italian*, while Mrs. Tofts, Mrs. Linsey, Mrs. Turner, Ramondon, and Leveridge, performed their's in English.—And in this curious manner it was repeated three several times; the public being always acquainted in the bills of the day, that the part of Turnus would be performed by Signor Valentini.

1708. By a sudden revolution in theatrical politics, Betterton and his company of comedians, after the performance of *Macbeth*, for the benefit of WILKS, on the 11th of January, abandoned their dominions in the Haymarket to foreign invaders, and uniting with their rivals at Drury Lane, established themselves in their old quarters.

Cibber is again erroneous in his account of this transaction, ascribing it chiefly to the arrival of NICOLINI in this kingdom. But this admirable performer, so frequently complimented in the *Spectator*, did not come to England till the end of that year, and the opera phalanx marched from Drury Lane to the Haymarket in January; where, on the 14th of that month, under the command of General Swiney, they opened their first campaign. *Thomyris*, which had been nine times represented before Christmas, at Drury Lane, was now performed with additional splendour; and, alternately with *Camilla*, continued its attractions till near the end of February. The music of *Thomyris*, though not of a high class, was superior to any that had been yet heard, in all the attempts at operas in this country.

In February, *Signor Cassani*, another Italian singer, arrived, who, with new songs, made his first appearance, in the part of *Mitius*, in *Camilla*. At this time a new subscription was opened, the num-

ber of tickets, at half a guinea each, not to exceed four hundred: first gallery, five shillings—upper gallery, two shillings.*

At the next performance of *Camilla*, tickets for the pit and boxes were advertised at seven shillings and sixpence—stage boxes, ten shillings and sixpence. Dances, by Miss Lantlow, afterwards Mrs. Booth, and others.

At the end of this month was first brought out the pastoral opera, called *Love's Triumph*, under the direction of Valentini, who had the eighth and last representation for his benefit. This drama was written in Italian, by Cardinal Ottoboni, and set to music by Carlo Cesarini Giovanni, detto del violone, and Francesco Gasparini. English words were adjusted to the airs by Motteux; and choruses with *dances analogues*, after the French manner, were added by way of experiment by Valentini, to ascertain whether our taste in dramatic music inclined most to the French or Italian style.

The indifferent success of this opera acquitted

* In Vanbrugh's theatre, which was burnt down in 1789, there were two galleries—the price of admission, latterly, to the upper gallery, was three shillings and sixpence.

us of all suspicion of partiality to the French style : for after only five representations, *Camilla* and *Thomyris* were performed alternately with *Love's Triumph*, and when Valentini's benefit was over, on the 17th of March, these two piebald, half Italian, and half English operas, were the support of the Theatre during the remainder of the season.

The Opera-House opened late the ensuing winter, on account of the decease of Prince George of Denmark, who, dying on the 28th of October, the theatres were all shut up till December 14th, when a new opera was brought out, called *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*, written originally in Italian, by Adriano Morselli, and first performed at Naples, to the music of Alessandro Scarlatti, in 1694. It was translated into English by *Swiney*, and the musical department arranged by Nicola Haym, who composed a new overture, and several additional songs, which have considerable merit.

The performance of this drama forms an æra in the annals of our lyric theatre, as it was the first in which the celebrated Cavalier NICOLINO GRIMALDI, commonly known by the name of NICOLINI, appeared. This great singer, and still greater actor, was a Neapolitan : his voice at first was a *soprano*, but afterwards descended into a fine counter-tenor. The first dramas in which his name appears, in Italy,

were *Tullo Ostillo*, and *Xerse*: both composed by John Bononcini, for Rome, in 1694; and in which he performed with the renowned Pistocchi, the founder of the Bologna school of singing. So that Quadrio has ranked him very properly among the famous opera singers, who began to appear between the year 1690, and 1700. During which period Nicolini was the principal singer, both at Naples and at Rome. From that time, till his arrival in England, whither he was drawn, as Cibber informs us, by the report of our passion for foreign operas, "*without any particular invitation or engagement*;" he sung at Venice, Milan, and other cities of Italy, where the musical drama was established.

Before his abilities as a singer are considered, it may be proper to remind the reader of Sir Richard Steele's Eloge upon him in the 115th number of the Tatler, as an actor: where, after calling the opera (it was *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*) "a noble entertainment," he adds, "for my own part I was fully satisfied with the sight of an actor, who, by the grace and propriety of his action, and gesture, does honour to the human figure. Every one will imagine I mean Signor Nicolini, who sets off the character he bears in an opera by his action, as he does the words of it by his voice. Every limb, and every finger contributes to the part he acts,

“ insomuch that a deaf man may go along with him
“ in the sense of it. There is scarce a beautiful
“ posture in an old statue, which he does not plant
“ himself in, as the different circumstances of the
“ story give occasion for it. He performs the most or-
“ dinary action in a manner suitable to the greatness
“ of his character, and shews the prince, even in the
“ giving of a letter, or despatching a messenger.”
“ Our best actors,” continues he, “ are somewhat
“ at a loss to support themselves with proper ges-
“ ture, as they move from any considerable distance
“ to the front of the stage; but I have seen the per-
“ son of whom I am now speaking, enter alone at
“ the remotest part of it, and advance with such
“ greatness of air and mien, as seemed to fill the
“ stage, and at the same time commanded the atten-
“ tion of the audience with the majesty of his ap-
“ pearance.”

The opera prices were raised on the arrival of this performer, the first truly great singer, who had ever sung in our theatre, to fifteen shillings for the boxes on the stage, half-a-guinea the pit, and other boxes, and the first gallery five shillings.

Valentini, the immediate predecessor of Nicolini, had a feeble voice, and but moderate execution; but, says Cibber, an excellent, and not a *partial* judge of that part of his performance, “ He supplied these
“ defects so well by his action, that his hearers bore

“ with the absurdity of his singing the part of Tur-
 “ nus in Camilla, all in Italian, while every other
 “ character was sung and recited in English.” And
 Mr. Galliard, a perfect judge of his merit, as a
 singer, says, that “ though less powerful in voice and
 “ action than Nicolini, he was more chaste in his
 “ singing.” Indeed, Tosi, the author of an excel-
 lent Treatise on the subject, is doubtful whether a
 perfect singer can at the same time be a perfect ac-
 tor: “ for the mind being divided by two different
 “ operations, he will probably incline more to the
 “ one, than the other: it being, however, far more
 “ difficult to sing well, than to act well, the merit of
 “ the first is beyond the second. What a felicity
 “ would it be to possess both in a perfect degree!”
 And the excellent translator of his work, the late
 Mr. Galliard, says, in a note on this passage, written
 in 1742, that, “ Nicolini had both qualities, more
 “ than any that have come hither since. He acted
 “ to perfection, and did not sing much inferior: his
 “ variations in the airs were excellent, but in his ca-
 “ dences he had a few antiquated tricks.”

Besides these two performers, with voices and
 abilities wholly new to an English audience, and who
 performed the principal characters of *Pirro* and *De-
 metrio*, in Italian, it appears by the printed copy of
 the music, that Margarita, and the Baroness likewise,

sung their parts in that language, while Mrs. Tofts, except in a duet, with Nicolini, Messrs. Ramondon and Cook kept to their mother tongue.

For the credit of our country, it is satisfactory to know that such absurdities were practised elsewhere. Riccoboni, in his General History of the Stage, tells us, that, at Hamburgh, in the early operas after the Italian manner, "the recitative was in the German language, and the airs generally in the Italian."

The songs in the opera of *Pirro*, are short, simple, and elegant for the time, but must have required great talents in the singers, to render them so highly attractive, as they appear to have been. We shall soon, however, arrive at much better music.

1709. After the six first subscription representations of this opera were over, a new subscription was opened on the 5th of January, at half-a-guinea, the boxes on the stage, the other boxes eight shillings, pit five shillings, first gallery two shillings and sixpence, second gallery one shilling and sixpence. The reason for this abatement does not appear.

On the 19th of the same month Nicolini had the same opera at the Queen's Theatre, for his benefit, and at the same prices, which was the eleventh representation of this motley performance. Indeed, the *confusion of tongues*, concerning which, Mr. Addison expresses himself with such exquisite plea-

sentry, in the *Spectator*, seems to have been tolerated with great good nature by the public.

After another performance of *Pirro e Demetrio*, the old and favourite opera of *Camilla* was represented, in which Nicolini appeared in the part of *Prinesto*, and the rest of the characters were cast in the strongest manner. It was now for the first time that the music of Bononcini was performed *entire*. This famous opera, which was represented sixty-four times in England, during four years!!! was not, as has been generally supposed, the composition of John Bononcini, the celebrated rival of Handel, but written by Stampiglia, and set originally for the imperial court of Vienna, about the year 1697, by Marc' Antonio, the brother of John Bononcini.

On the 4th of June, Nicolini had a *concert* for his benefit, at the Opera-House, consisting of vocal and instrumental music, composed by Scarlatti, Bononcini, and others.

On the 15th of September, on a disagreement with Mr. Rich, the patentee of Drury Lane, a considerable number of the principal comedians revolted, and engaged to act plays at the Opera-House, under the management of Swiney. The chief of these were, Wilks, Cibber, Dogget, and Mrs. Oldfield. On this occasion great alterations and improvements were made in the theatre, which, how-

ever well calculated for music, was, according to Cibber, extremely unfavourable to declamation.

This new troop being joined by Betterton, Estcourt, and many others, plays very strongly cast were acted till the 28th of October, when the opera of *Camilla* was again performed, and afterwards *Thomyris* and *Pyrrhus*, and *Demetrius*, alternately with plays, till after Christmas. This last opera was acted in the course of the year thirty times, a very uncommon number of representations for a musical drama at present, when music and performers, with the exception of Nicolini, are so infinitely superior to those of 1709.

As operas improve, hearers become fastidious. The public soon grow familiar with excellence; and after the first curiosity is satisfied, a considerable portion of an audience become critics, and in direct opposition to Horace's rule of candid criticism, gratify their vanity more by being the first to discover defects in the performers, than they did at first by pointing out their merits.

1710. The two companies of comedians and singers continued to act plays and operas alternately at the Queen's Theatre this year, till the month of November.

In January, after one representation of *Thomyris*, and one of *Pyrrhus* and *Demetrius*, the musical

500 ORIGIN AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE

troop brought out a new opera, called *Almahide*. Neither the poet nor composer is mentioned, either in the book of the words, or printed copy of the music, which greatly resembles the style of Bononcini. This was the first opera performed in England, WHOLLY IN ITALIAN, and by Italian singers only: these were, Nicolini, Valentini, Cassani, Margarita, and Isabella Girardeau. There were, indeed, interludes between the acts in English, and sung by Dogget, Mrs. Lindsey, and Mrs. Croft; but the opera was wholly Italian, in poetry, music, and performance.

There were operas at this time, as at present, twice a week: and *Almahide* was performed fourteen times before the summer recess.

By the advertisements of the second of March, the farce of the *School Boy*, and the *rehearsal* of a new opera, formed the whole evening's entertainment, for which the prices were, boxes five shillings, pit three shillings, first gallery two shillings, second gallery one shilling, stage boxes eight shillings.

This new opera was *Hydaspes*, or *L'Idaspe Fedele*, set to music by Francesco Mancini, a Roman composer, and brought out in England on the twenty-third of May, by Nicolini, who dedicated the *libretto*, or Book of the Words, to the Marquis of Kent, the lord chamberlain to Queen Anne.

This opera was likewise wholly performed in Italian, and by Italians, except an inferior part by Mr. Lawrence, which he sung, however, in Italian.*

The other performers were the same as in *Almahide*.

Hydaspes was represented twenty-one times, and seems to have been generally approved. The *Lion*, in this opera, gave birth to several admirable papers in the first volume of the *Spectator*, particularly No. 13, by Mr. Addison, in which the humour is exquisite.

This excellent writer, still indignant at the fate of his *Fair Rosamond*, philosophically concluded that nonsense was alone capable of being set to music, and was by no means partial to Italian operas. He does justice, however, to Nicolini, in speaking of the childishness of the *Leonian* combat in *Hydaspes*.†

* This English singer continued till the year 1717, to perform under parts in Italian operas. His voice was a tenor of considerable agility, as appears by his songs in the opera of *Thomyris*, which contain more divisions, and of a more difficult kind, than those of any singer then on the opera stage, except *Margarita*.

† In the year 1792, during the carnival, the author of this note, witnessed a still more ridiculous scene at

" It gives me a just indignation," says he, " to see
 " a person, whose action gives new majesty to kings,
 " resolution to heroes, and softness to lovers, thus
 " sinking from the greatness of his behaviour, and
 " degraded into the character of the London *Pren-*
 " *tice*. I have often wished that our tragedians
 " would copy after this great master in action.
 " Could they make the same use of their arms and
 " legs, and inform their faces with as significant
 " looks and passions, how glorious would an Eng-
 " lish tragedy appear, with that action which is ca-
 " pable of giving a dignity to the forced thoughts,
 " cold conceits, and unnatural expressions of an Ita-
 " lian opera." The music in *Hydaspes* is inferior to
 several preceding operas of Scarlatti, Gasparini,
 and Bononcini. The style is feeble, and the pas-
 sages were insipid and common, even at the time
 they were produced.

the Opera House of San Moise at Venice. *La Sacri-*
fizia de Crete, was the drama, in which the celebrated
 David had a 'bravura song, during his combat with the
 Minotaur; towards the conclusion of which the monster
 expired. This song was constantly encored, and the
 Minotaur, as constantly, without ceremony, revived, and
fought his battle o'er again, with increased vigour, and
 proportionate acclamations.

On the 18th of November, *Macbeth* was the last play which the company of English actors performed at the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket; after which they returned to Drury Lane, where they began to act on the Monday following, abandoning the Opera House entirely to the Italian troop.

On the 22d of November, *Hydaspes* was advertised, when the part of *Berenice* was announced in the bills to be performed by Signora Elizabetta Pi-lotti Schiavonetti, and *Artaserse* by Signor Boschi, two new Italian singers. Signora Boschi, his wife, had been a great singer, but was much past her prime when she arrived in England, where she appeared for the first time on the 9th of December, in the opera of *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*. Schiavonetti remained here as second woman, till the year 1717.

Boschi had a fine bass voice, for which Handel composed some of his best bass songs. At this time Boschi stayed but one season in England; but returned hither in the year 1720, and continued to sing in Handel's operas till the year 1727.

Before we proceed farther, a short account of some of the singers already mentioned, may not be unacceptable to many of our readers.

To begin, then, by the performers in *Arsinoe*, who had not only all the absurdities usually laid to the charge of operas in general to contend with, but

at once laboured under the united disadvantages of bad poetry, bad music, and total inexperience.

Mr. HUGHS had been a favourite singer at concerts, and between the acts of plays, for several years, before he appeared in the part of first man in the first opera that ever was performed on our stage in the Italian manner. His voice was a *counter-tenor*, as we are told in the *dramatis personæ* of *Thomyris*; and, indeed, as the compass of his songs discovers. He continued to perform the first part till the arrival of Valentini, after which we have no further account of him.

RICHARD LEVERIDGE had a deep and powerful bass voice. Purcell's admirable bass song, "*Ye twice ten hundred Deities*," in the *Indian Queen*, written by Sir Robert Howard and Dryden, was set on purpose for him.

In 1699, he appeared at Drury-lane, not only as a singer, but as a composer, in an English opera called the *Island Princess*, of which the music was composed by Daniel Purcell, Jeremiah Clarke, and Leveridge. Singing by Mr. Leveridge was announced in almost every advertisement of that theatre, till operas on the Italian plan were attempted, when he had a part assigned to him in each, as long as English was allowed to be sung in them. He afterwards attached himself to Rich, the manager of Lincoln's-

Inn Fields and Covent Garden, at which last theatre he continued to sing in pantomime entertainments till the middle of the last century, when he was more than eighty years old. Dr. Burney says, he remembers his singing "Ghosts of every Occupation," and several of Purcell's bass songs, in a style which even at that time appeared antediluvian; but as he generally was the representative of Pluto, Neptune, or some ancient divinity, it corresponded exactly with his figure and character. He was not only a celebrated singer of convivial songs, but the writer and composer of many which were in great favour with singers and hearers of a certain class, who more piously performed the rites of Comus and Bacchus than those of Minerva and Apollo. He died in the year 1758, at eighty-eight years of age.

Mrs TOFTS endeared herself to an English audience by her voice, figure, and performance, more than any preceding singer of our own country, whose name and merits have been recorded. Cibber, though he does not speak of music *en connoisseur*; and as an English actor and patentee of a theatre, was an enemy to Italian operas and Italian singers, upon a principle of self-defence, probably gives us the general and genuine opinion of his acquaintance concerning Mrs. Tofts, who, he says, had her first musical instructions in her own country, "before the Italian

“ taste had so highly prevailed, and was then not an
 “ adept: whatever defect the fashionably skilful
 “ might find in her manner, she had, in the general
 “ sense of her hearers, charms that few of the most
 “ learned singers ever arrive at. The beauty of her
 “ fine proportioned figure, and exquisitely sweet,
 “ silver tone of voice, with peculiar rapid swiftness
 “ of her throat, were perfections not to be imitated
 “ by art or labour.”

Mrs. Tofts quitted the stage in 1709, having, as
 it is said, acquired a considerable fortune. She mar-
 ried Mr. Joseph Smith, who was afterwards appoint-
 ed consul at Venice, where he resided till the time
 of his death, about 1770. He was a great collector
 of books and pictures, and a patron of the arts in
 general.

The talents of this lady, and of Margarita de l'E-
 pine, gave rise to the first musical factions that we
 hear of in this country. According to Hughes, au-
 thor of the Siege of Damascus, their abilities were
 disputed by the first people in the kingdom.

“ Music has learned the discords of the state,
 “ And concerts jar with Whig and Tory hate.
 “ Here Somerset and Devonshire attend
 “ The British Tofts, and ev'ry note commend,
 “ To native merit just, and pleased to see
 “ We've Roman arts from Roman bondage free.

“ There fam’d L’EPINE does equal skill employ,
“ While list’ning peers crowd to th’ extatic joy :
“ Bedford to hear her song his dice forsakes,
“ And Nottingham is raptured when she shakes ;
“ Lull’d statesmen melt away their drowsy cares
“ Of England’s safety in Italian airs.”

The execution of *Margarita de l’Epine* was of a very different kind from that thus described, and involved real difficulties : her musical merit must have been very considerable indeed, or she could never have so long retained the favour of the public. Till she was employed at the opera, she sung on the English stage, either in musical entertainments, or between the acts, almost every night. Besides the *crime* of being a foreigner, she was so swarthy and ill-favoured, that her husband, Dr. Pepusch, used to call her *Hecate*, a name to which she answered with as much good-humour as if he had called her *Helen*. But with such a total absence of personal charms, our galleries would have made her songs very short, had they not been executed in such a manner as to command applause.

Dean Swift, who was no respecter of persons, especially musical professors, in his *Journal to Stella*, Aug. 6th, 1711, being at Windsor, says : “ We

“ have a music-meeting in our town to-night. I
 “ went to the rehearsal of it, and there was *Margarita*
 “ and her sister, and another drab, and a parcel of
 “ fiddlers: I was weary, and would not go to the
 “ meeting, which I am sorry for, because I heard
 “ it was a great assembly.” He talks frequently of
 the music meetings at Windsor, but always with con-
 tempt; as for instance: “ In half an hour I was
 “ tired of their *fine stuff*.” And the fiddlers, in re-
 venge, would probably have returned the compli-
 ment, while the dean was preaching, and have quit-
 ted the church with a similar speech. Puns and po-
 litics chiefly delighted the one, puns and porter per-
 haps the other; both alike despising what they nei-
 ther felt nor understood.

There is something mysterious in the title and
 history of the singer called the BARONESS. All that
 can be said of her with certainty is, that she was a
 German, who had learned to sing in Italy, and had
 performed in the operas at several German courts by
 that appellation, previous to her arrival in England,
 where she sung in the dramas of *Cassilla*, *Triumph*
of Love, and *Pyrrhus* and *Demetrius*. In the last
 of which she sung a duet with Mrs. Tofts, and three
 or four songs that required abilities.

The Italian opera had now obtained a settlement,

and established a colony on our island, which, having from time to time been renovated and supplied from the mother country, had subsisted ever since. The ancient Romans had the fine arts from Greece, which Greece herself has imported from Egypt. Egypt and Greece are now alike the abodes of barbarism, and modern Italy has now become the inexhaustible reservoir, whence the rest of Europe is supplied with painting, sculpture, and music. This last art is a manufacture of Italy, which feeds and enriches a large portion of the people, and which it is no more disgraceful to a mercantile nation to import, than wine, tea, or any other production of remote parts of the world, which is not the natural growth of our own soil.

The English have not only manifested a liberal spirit with respect to the Italian opera, but also good taste and good sense; for it is universally allowed, that the Italian tongue is more sonorous, more sweet and of more easy utterance, than any other modern, or perhaps we may add, *ancient* language; and that the *vocal* music of Italy, probably for that reason, has been more successfully cultivated than any other in Europe. Now the vocal music of Italy can only be heard in perfection when sung in its own language, and by its own natives, who give both the lan-

guage and music their true accent and expression; consequently there is as much reason for wishing to hear Italian music performed in this genuine manner, as for the lovers of painting to prefer an original picture of Raffaele to a copy.

I am, &c.

END OF VOLUME THE SECOND.

J. G. BARNARD,
Shinner-Street, London.





